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The development of the union superintendency system  
of school supervision in Massachusetts.



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THESIS

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE  
UNION SUPERINTENDENCY SYSTEM  
OF SCHOOL  
SUPERVISION IN MASSACHUSETTS

Submitted by

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OF SCHOOL SUPERVISION IN  
MASSACHUSETTS  
INTRODUCTION

The union superintendent type of school supervision has developed in Massachusetts within the last sixty years as it has not developed in any of the other states of the union. It may be that the existence of separate town governments, which exist only in New England, have caused this type of supervision to thrive more in Massachusetts than elsewhere. Why it has not been adopted more completely by the other New England states is problematical. It may be that Massachusetts is the only state that can offer sufficient state aid to induce the towns to share with the state the obligations of maintaining good schools.

The purpose of this thesis is not to add anything new on the subject of union superintendencies, but rather to collect as much of the scattered material dealing with them as it is possible to accumulate. The author knows of no published document which gives a complete unified discussion regarding the origin and development of the union superintendency system. Such a document should be of interest to those persons who are planning on entering a career of school supervision.

The annual reports of the State Board of Education contain most of the material dealing with the union

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superintendencies in the state of Massachusetts, but the material is so scattered that it would be very difficult for an interested person to locate any desired information in these reports.

Much of the material used in this thesis has been obtained from the annual reports in various towns throughout the state, by personal interviews with various members of the Massachusetts State Department of Education, and from certain authors who have touched on the subject incident to the writing of books on school administration.

The author's former Superintendent, Mr. Charles A. Harris, owns a very complete library which contains all the state reports, and a very large collection of books dealing with school administration. Mr. Harris has been very helpful in searching for much of the material used in this thesis and has assisted the writer in every way possible.

From these sources and from others which have been listed in the bibliography, the author has attempted to give a historical record of the union superintendency system of supervision in Massachusetts. He has not tried to limit his discussion to any one union or to any one phase of the development. He endeavors to give, in general, a history of the union superintendencies from their real inception in 1888 to the year 1935.

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By union superintendency is meant the union of two or more towns of certain valuation and containing a certain number of schools for the purpose of employing a union superintendent of schools.<sup>1</sup>

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1 Research Publications of the University of Minnesota Studies in Public School Finance (Massachusetts) by Fletcher Harper Swift, Professor of Education at the University of Minnesota. Published by the University of Minnesota in 1923.

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## CHAPTER I

### INCEPTION OF THE SUPERINTENDENCY SYSTEM

In the early part of the nineteenth century, the local school committees performed what little supervision there was in the various schools. Previous to 1834, many of the towns entirely neglected to institute systematic superintendence of the schools.<sup>1</sup>

Lack of education, training, and time necessarily caused the committee type of supervision to be limited largely to the inspection of the physical aspects of the school systems.

In order to establish a background for the necessity of the superintendency system, it has been found necessary to search the early reports of some city school committees for comments on the subject. In 1839, the Springfield Committee first suggested the employment of a Superintendent of Schools and wrote, in part: "No school committee, with their time almost wholly occupied with other duties, can be expected to inspect the numerous schools in this town, scattered over so wide a territory, as thoroughly as the law requires, and their interests demands."<sup>2</sup>

In 1841, the Cambridge committee complained of the burden imposed upon it by a school law which required school committees to visit every school under their jurisdiction at least once a month for a half day.<sup>3</sup>

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1 School Laws for the Use of School Committees:  
Write and Patter State Printers Boston 1875

2 Annual Report of the City of Springfield. 1839

3. Acts of 1834 Chapter 39 Section 26





The Cambridge committee wrote, in part:<sup>4</sup>

"The duties of the committee have so much increased as to demand, in our opinion an addition to its number. Besides the labor incident in general to the charge of twenty-three schools, that of making all the visits required by law, has become in this town oppressive. During the past year, your committee have made 510 visits to the schools; and this number, they believe, great as it is, still falls below the requirements of the statutes. They suggest either the appointment of a superintendent of schools, who shall devote his whole time to their demands, and be subject to the general direction and confirmation of some five or seven other individuals, or an enlargement of the committee to nine or eleven."

In 1842, the New Bedford Committee wrote, in part:<sup>5</sup>

"We believe that the employment of a proper person as superintendent of Public Schools, who should devote a portion, or the whole of his time to their interests, would be a judicious expenditure of money."

These statements indicate that the committees did not feel exactly competent to do the work of supervision as it should be done.

The committee-type of supervision was fairly effective and satisfactory as long as the educational system retained the simplicity of material taught and the methods used. As education tended to become more universal and the teachers became better trained, there seemed to be a necessity for a departure from the old conventional type of committee inspection to a type of supervision that possessed more of a professional nature. Mr. Prince gives the following statement in regard to the necessity for better supervision:<sup>6</sup>

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4 Annual Report of the city of Cambridge 1840.

5 Annual Report of the City of New Bedford 1842.

6 John Prince-School Administration p. 252 Pub: C. W. Bardeen, Syracuse N. Y. 1906.





"It is a significant fact that with the improvement of teaching (by Normal School preparation) there grew up an ever-increasing need of more and better supervision on the part of school committees. At first one and another board of school committee selected one of its own number to perform the duties of supervision, on the plan, doubtless, that even an unprofessional supervisor employed all the time could do the work more intelligently than could several men in odd times of a busy life."

Along this same line, Mr. Martin stated:<sup>7</sup>

"Out of the necessities of this broadened and more complex educational system there has been evolved, within recent years a new educational function--that of professional Superintendent of Public Schools."

In Mr. A. W. Edson's report to the States Board of Education in 1889, he included the following statement which he took from the report of a school committee:<sup>8</sup>

"We are not egotistical enough to claim that we have a sufficient amount of technical learning adapted to this work, or the right kind of training for it. We are no worse than the average school committee; better, perhaps, than some."

These references are only three of many which indicate that the change in the type of school supervision was necessitated by the changes in the complexities of school procedures. It would be rather difficult to imagine the average layman of today, who is likely to be a member of a school committee, being able to supervise the teaching of a professionally-trained teacher. Indeed, the average layman has very little conception

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<sup>7</sup> George Martin--The Evolution of the Massachusetts Public School System p. 220.

<sup>8</sup> Fifty-second Annual Report of the Board of Education p. 256.

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Along this same line, Mr. Martin asserted:

"Out of the necessities of this process and more complex educational system there has been evolved, within recent years a new educational function--that of professional Superintendent of Public Schools."

In Mr. A. W. Mason's report to the State Board of Education in 1889, he included the following statement which he took from the report of a school committee:

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of the type or quantity of supplies that are necessary for the proper maintenance of present day schools.

Mr. Martin suggested that it was quite possible that the superintendent-type of supervision originated because methods of a similar nature had been carried on in factory systems where some one person was placed at the head of a business for the purpose of managing it. Mr. Martin wrote rather fluently on this topic and said, in part: <sup>9</sup>

"The idea was first put in practice in New England, in Providence--suggested, it is said, to its originators there by the factory system of the State. However that may be, the modern organization of industries has furnished analogy and argument more potent than any other in securing attention to the system and promoting its adoption. The fact is conspicuous, that the success of all great business enterprises is conditioned not so much on the quality of the individual employees, nor on the general intelligence and financial standing of the board of control, as on the capacity of the overseers, the superintendent, and the general manager.

"The modern principle of the division of labor has developed experts and specialists in all lines, not only material in production and distribution of commodities--but in scientific research and in professional labor. It would have been strange if a principle so generally accepted and applied had not been applied to the realm of education. It has entered and pervaded it, on the whole, with signal benefits and with some drawbacks.

The business analogy has helped to carry forward the superintendency in Massachusetts. Beginning in Springfield, in 1840, as an experiment, it had no permanent place in the State until Boston adopted the plan in 1861."

It was only <sup>fourteen</sup> // years after the Springfield experiment had taken place that the state legislature

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<sup>9</sup> George Martin--Ibid--p. 220





first passed laws authorizing the employment of a superintendent of public schools. These state laws will be given at the beginning of the chapter on the development of the laws regulating union superintendencies.

The necessity of having a superintendent to assist the school committee in visiting the schools was not the only reason why the superintendency system became more firmly established in cities and large towns. Here the people were more used to the factory system and did not offer much objection as did the residents of small towns and the farmers. Mr. Martin wrote:<sup>10</sup>

"It has encountered less opposition among business men and in manufacturing communities than among farmers, who are less conversant with modern industrial methods."

The superintendency system did not develop in the rural sections to any extent until the present system of union superintendencies was organized.

A law had been passed in 1870 authorizing two or more towns to unite to form a union district. Mr. John W. Dickinson wrote in 1887:<sup>11</sup>

"Each of the cities and large towns have for many years employed a superintendent, who devoted his entire time to the supervision of the public schools, but the smaller towns have failed to provide their schools with any supervisor except that furnished by their respective school committees. Although an act was passed nearly twenty years ago authorizing two or more towns to unite to form a union district for the employment of a district supervisor, yet very few districts have been formed under its authority. This has doubtless been due in part to the expense attending such employment, and in part

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10 Fifty Second Annual Report of the Board of Education p. 19.

11 Early Superintendencies--52nd Annual Report 1887-88.





to the anticipated difficulties of securing and carrying out such joint municipal action.

As an inducement to joint action on the part of the smaller towns, the last Legislature passed an act granting pecuniary aid to two or more such towns, each of a certain specified valuation, which should unite and form a union district and employ a superintendent for one year, such aid to be expended, one-half in paying the salary of such superintendent, and one-half in paying the salaries of the teachers employed in the public schools within such district.

Several districts have already been formed under this act, and it is believed that its continued operation will eventually lead to the employment of superintendents in all the towns of our Commonwealth."

The people living in rural districts were loath to give up any part of their cherished control of their schools, and as Mr. Martin says, it was not until the "jingling of the guinea" from the State Treasury was heard by them that they were induced to overcome the fear of centralization.

From all the sources of material studied, the previous statements seem to represent a general consensus of opinion regarding the reasons for the existence of the superintendency system and also the reasons why it developed as it did until the installation of the union superintendency system.





## CHAPTER II

### FIRST UNION SUPERINTENDENCIES

To the superintendents of the seventy-three unions which exist today, composed of two hundred twenty-three towns, is entrusted the task of supervision which was originally performed by the school committees of the various towns and districts within the larger towns. A professional superintendent of schools, working under the direction of the school committee, is now an indispensable part of every successful school system.<sup>1</sup> It was a difficult task to induce the towns to enter the unions, and it was still more difficult to maintain harmony and satisfaction within the union after it had been formed.

#### A. MAJOR OBSTACLES

The Superintendency system had not been introduced permanently into the state of Massachusetts until 1851, when Boston started it. ~~Nineteen~~ years later, a permissive law was passed allowing smaller towns to unite into districts for the purpose of employing a Superintendent; and only ~~eighteen~~ years after that, the first attempt was made to establish the present type of union superintendencies. It was only natural that the rural people, where the school systems had not advanced very much, should offer that old objection,

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1 Dickinson - Ibid p. 169

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"It was good enough in my day. Why do we need to change present conditions?" It is always very difficult to get people in rural districts to vote to change old procedures that do not demand immediate action.

If it had been something that the individual town could decide upon, it would have been different. In this case, it was necessary to get the people in two or more towns to vote to form a union. There has always been a sort of rivalry and jealousy between the smaller, adjoining towns, and it was difficult to get a favorable vote in all the proposed towns at the same time. If any one of the towns voted unfavorably, the whole vote had to be cast aside because conditions were always different when another set-up was proposed.

The towns had always managed their own schools in almost whatever way they desired. To enter into one of these Superintendency unions and <sup>to</sup> accept the state aid which was offered, the towns had to comply with certain rules and regulations which the State Department of Education was proposing. The towns did not like to have any outside organization insisting that they conduct their schools in such a way as to conform to certain specific standards. The towns were afraid of losing their individuality by too much

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vote in all the proposed towns at the same time. If any  
one of the towns voted unfavorably, the whole vote had to  
be cast against because conflict was not allowed. It  
was another reason for the proposal.  
The towns had always made their own choice in the  
past. They were divided. To elect them was of their  
own free will. They elected the state and county  
officers. The towns had no difficulty with their  
representation. The state government of Massachusetts  
was elected. The towns did not like to have any  
elections. The towns were not in a position to  
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centralization of authority in the state organization. This fear was finally overcome when the taxpayers realized that the small sacrifice of pride would result in a saving of taxes for the maintenance of the public schools.

When the union system was first proposed and fostered, it did entail a certain amount of expense on the various towns. They had to appropriate half of the superintendent's salary and half of his travelling expenses. Of course, it was only natural that many of the conservative towns would rather continue their old practice than to turn to something new, perhaps of a questionable nature, that was going to cost them more money. This objection was gradually overcome by the state offering to pay other sorts of bills, such <sup>as the</sup> partial payment of the salaries of teachers employed by the towns if they would enter unions.

Another serious difficulty was that of finding suitable men who were properly trained to perform the duties of a union superintendent. Most of the supervision had always been done by members of the school committee, and there had been little chance for men to become experienced. Mr. Martin expressed this difficulty when he said: <sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Martin--~~Ibid~~--p. 221





"The most serious difficulty in extending and perfecting the system has been in the lack of suitable men. The duties of the office have been arduous, and relations delicate, the tenure precarious, and the pay out of proportion to the capacity and service demanded; and the best men have often been restrained by school boards from fulfilling all the appropriate functions of the office. In spite of these hindrances, it is true that the progress made in public-school education within recent years has been chiefly due to the broad conceptions, the wise plans, and the skillful administration of these officers."

#### B. THE FIRST REAL SUPERINTENDENCY UNIONS

In 1870, a law was passed giving authority to any two or more towns to form a district, for the purpose of employing a superintendent of public schools therein, who should perform in each town, the duties prescribed by law. Two districts were formed under the provisions of that statute by 1880! One in Waltham and Watertown in 1872; and the other in Canton and Milton in 1878. The Secretary of the State Board of Education made the following comment on these unions:

"These unions are doing a grand work for their districts, and are solving the problems relating to district supervision. If all the smaller towns of the commonwealth could be united in convenient districts, and in this way supplied with adequate school superintendence, experience is proving that the conditions of good schools would be supplied."

By 1887, only ten smaller towns had employed a superintendent jointly with each other. In those towns no formal union existed.





The State legislature passed a law in 1888 which stated that any two or more towns, the valuation of each of which did not exceed two and a half million of dollars, might unite in the employment of a Superintendent of schools. If the towns would agree to do so, the state would make a contribution to them of one thousand dollars. The State Board of Education suggested the methods which the towns should use in forming such a union. The first step was a vote of each town. As a suitable form for an article in the warrant for the towns meeting, the Board suggested the following: <sup>3</sup>

"To see if the town will unite with the towns of \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ for the purpose of employing a superintendent of schools under the provisions of Chapter 431 of the Acts of 1888."

If the towns should act affirmatively on this article, the next step which the Board said should be taken was for the school committees of the towns to meet as a joint committee annually, usually in the month of April, and, after organizing by choice of chairman and secretary, to choose by ballot a superintendent of schools and fix his salary. The third step which the Board suggested as necessary was for the joint committee to determine how the superintendent's time should be divided among the towns and apportion, accordingly, the amount to be raised for his salary.

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<sup>3</sup> Fifty-second Annual Report of the Board of Education 1887-1888--p. 170

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"To see if the town will unite with the towns of \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ for the purpose of employing a Superintendent of schools under the provisions of Chapter 431 of the Acts of 1888."

If the towns should not affirmatively vote on this article, the next step which the Board said should be taken was for the school committee of the towns to meet as a joint committee annually, usually in the month of April, and, after organizing by choice of chairman and secretary, to choose by ballot a Superintendent of schools and fix his salary. The third step which the Board suggested as necessary was for the joint committee to determine how the Superintendent's time should be divided among the towns and apportion, accordingly, the amount to be raised for his salary.



Under this law, the first union superintendency of the type that exists today was formed in 1888 and was composed of the towns of Duxbury, Marshfield, and Scituate. This union was the only one formed in 1888. The next year, five more unions were formed, and from that time forward, the number increased rapidly, until in 1900, when the state legislature changed the permissive law which said that towns of certain valuations might unite to employ a superintendent to the mandatory law which obliged the school committees of all towns and cities to employ a superintendent of schools after July 1, 1902. This law also stated that those towns which had a valuation of less than two and one-half million dollars should be governed by the law of 1888 relating to union districts. <sup>4</sup>

The unions formed after 1900 were formed under compulsion, and by 1904, only five towns in the state, that were required by law to be in a union, were not in any union. Those towns were: Ashburnham, Boxford, Middleton, Nantucket, and Gosnold. Some of these towns had been in unions but withdrew on account of dissatisfaction with conditions, and had not been able to form new alliances. <sup>5</sup>

The first union, composed of Duxbury, Marshfield,

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<sup>4</sup> John Prince--Ibid--p. 252

<sup>5</sup> Sixty-eighth Annual Report of the Department of Education 1903-1904--p. 108





and Scituate, should probably be of more importance than any of the other unions because this one was the pioneer. There were no predecessors from which to copy, neither was there anyone capable of giving experienced advice. The committees of these three towns had to work in conjunction with the State Department of Education. The committees of the three towns reported the whole procedure as follows:

"The School Committee in the Town of Duxbury started to propose the formation of a union in its Annual report of the 1887-88 school year and said on the subject, <sup>6</sup>

"Knowing that any decided improvement in country schools must be brought about by combination of schools, and through supervision by a trained Superintendent, your Committee has during the year discussed the plan of recommending a union with Marshfield for the purpose of employing a Superintendent.

Within the last few years many towns throughout the State have taken this step, and invariably the schools at once begun to improve. The Superintendent has one general plan for all the schools and this develops those which is out of the line of progress. He is the principal, as it were, who lays out the work with a definite end in view, and prescribes and illustrates the methods to be used. He applies tests to the work done, and knows at any time the point each class has reached, so that there are no steps backward. His whole time is given to the work of superintendence, his training, and reading, make him a specialist in education, while his work and intercourse outside of the schoolroom make him a practical business man.

A bill is now before the Legislature providing for the union of two or more towns for the purpose of employing a Superintendent and for the payment of a part of the salary by the State; and, although this may not pass this year, such unions are now permitted and re-

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6 Annual Report of the School Committee--Town of Duxbury 1887-88--p. 55 of the Town Report for that year.





commended, and it is to be hoped that the people of this Town, if there be an article in the warrant which will enable them to do so, will take the first step in this direction."

In 1888, the Warrant for the Town meeting to be held April 2nd, the following Article, number 12, appears: <sup>7</sup>

"To see if the Town will choose a Committee to confer with the Towns of Scituate, South Scituate, Marshfield and Pembroke, in relation to the appointment of a Superintendent of Schools for said Towns, including Duxbury." By petition

The School Committee's Report for 1888-89 contained the following comments on the subject: <sup>8</sup>

"At the last annual Town Meeting, the members of the School Committee, were chosen a Committee to confer with neighboring towns in regard to the employment of a Superintendent of Schools, and in this report the Committee would make a report of the matter thus especially entrusted to them.

An act to aid small towns to provide themselves with School Superintendents was at that time pending in the Legislature and was afterwards passed and approved." This act (Chap. 431 of the Acts of 1888) will be discussed in a later chapter.

After the passage of this act the Committee decided to confer with the towns of Marshfield and Scituate, those towns from their valuation, number of schools, location and similarity of schools, forming with Duxbury the best district for advantageous work that it seemed possible to form.

As a result of these conferences, Scituate has already voted unanimously to unite with Marshfield and Duxbury for the purpose of employing a Superintendent of Schools, having appropriated \$250 of the amount necessary to be raised by the several towns, and while this report is in press Marshfield will have taken action in the matter. We are assured by a number of the citizens of Marshfield that the town will follow the lead of

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7 Duxbury, Ibid: p. 35

8 Duxbury, Ibid: p. 5





Scituate and the Committee earnestly recommended this town to take favorable action on the two articles referring to this matter which have been placed in the warrant.

Among the many reasons which might be given for recommending the employment of a Superintendent, we give the following:

1. The testimony of those competent to judge in the matter of improvement that has followed the employment of efficient superintendents, as shown notably in the case of Quincy, Massachusetts.

2. The successful working of the plan of uniting towns for the employment of a Superintendent of Schools, six districts having been formed under the law of 1870, which gave no state aid.

3. The conditions and needs of the schools of Duxbury, our schools, with the exception of the High School, incorporated as Patridge Academy, being ingraded with a very indefinite course of study.

4. The small expense attending such a trial.

In closing, the Committee would again urge the matter of the employment of a Superintendent of Schools under the plan recommended."

In 1889 the warrant for April 1 contained this article number 10: <sup>9</sup>

"Will the Town unite with the towns of Scituate and Marshfield for the purpose of employing a Superintendent of Schools, under the provisions of Chapter 431 of the Acts of 1888?

Article Number 11 of the same year:

"Will the Town appropriate two hundred and fifty dollars towards the support of a Superintendent of Schools?"

In the Annual Report of the Duxbury School Committee for the school year of 1889-90 the following discussion was given: <sup>10</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Duxbury, Ibid p. 33  
<sup>10</sup> Duxbury, Ibid p. 4





"The Town having voted at its last annual meeting to unite with the towns of Marshfield and Scituate for the employment of a Superintendent of Schools under the provision of Chapter 431 of acts of 1888, the School Committees of the three towns met in joint convention early in April last, and organized with the choice of Colonel H. A. Oakman of Marshfield for Chairman, and Mr. C. F. Jacobs of Duxbury as Secretary. Mr. Frank W. Sweet of Portsmouth, New Hampshire was elected Superintendent. Mr. Sweet resigned that fall to accept a similar position in Bridgewater. Mr. Edwin H. Watson was then elected. His first task was to prepare a course of study, and grade the schools. The results of a vast amount of preliminary work not being at once apparent, some persons have been disposed to ask what improvement has been made, and if a Superintendent, in so large a district, can give time enough to the schools to make it advisable to continue the plan. The Committee are confident that a long step has been taken in the right direction and that, with the continuation of the present plan, the schools must be decidedly improved."

Warrant 1890, March 10, Article 11. 11

"To see what action the Town will take in regard to Superintendent of Schools".

The same article appeared again in 1891, and each time the Town voted to retain the Superintendent.

By the time the Duxbury Committee was ready to make its Annual Report for the school year of 1890-91, the union had been fairly-well established and the committee had less to say on the subject. The following statement is all that was given: 12

"The towns of Scituate, Marshfield and Duxbury voted at the annual meetings in the Spring of 1890 to continue the system of supervision for which they had previously organized . . . . .  
The committee felt confident that the schools have improved under supervision, and are satisfied, with the continuation of the present system, much better work may be done than has been done in the past."

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11 Duxbury, Ibid p. 3

12 Duxbury, Ibid p. 4





The Duxbury reports prior and subsequent to those quoted here had nothing to say on the question of establishing or maintaining the union for the employment of a Superintendent of Schools. In 1926, Duxbury withdrew from the union and has had a Superintendent-Principal since that date.

The School Committee in the Town of Marshfield had been discussing the superintendence by the committee for some years before advocating the hiring of a superintendent. In the Annual Report of 1887-88, the committee said, 13

"You have confided to us for the past year the superintendence of these schools. We have felt the greatness of the trust and have regretted that we have not been able to bring greater ability and give more time in its discharge.

The question of the superintendence of schools is becoming a prominent one throughout our State. In most cities and large towns a Superintendent is now employed, who, under the direction and control of the school committee, has the care and supervision of the public schools. As the statute provides that several towns may unite to employ a Superintendent, it becomes possible for smaller towns to have the services of such an officer.

It is plain that efficient supervision of schools must be by one familiar with the details of school work and who has a knowledge of the theory and practice of teaching. He--or she--must have what may be called a professional knowledge of the work. It is this special or professional knowledge which is not very often found in members of school committees who are engaged in cities vocations. The Superintendent such as is contemplated, must be almost necessarily one who makes his business a specialty, and gives his time to the work as to a profession.





When such superintendence as we have described can be had, either alone or in conjunction with other towns there can be no question as to the wisdom of securing it. Should we not ourselves propose it, we shall undoubtedly have propositions from neighboring towns to unite with them. In fact members of committees of neighboring towns have already consented as to the advisability of bringing the matter before the Town for action at once. The question of a more adequate or more professional superintendence of schools will undoubtedly be before us for decision soon.

It may be remembered, when considering a Superintendent that when a Superintendent is employed, unless the town votes otherwise the School Committee receive no pay.

With the best system of superintendence possible, with the best teachers, with every accomodation and desirable appliance that money can procure, success if not thereby assured. These are aids, the benefits are only secured when the learner avails himself of the opportunities and guidance. He must himself work or all that is done for him is of little worth."

Exactly the same article appeared in the Marshfield Warrant for 1888 as appeared in the Duxbury Warrant for the same year. (see p. 17)

In their report for the 1888-89 school year, the committee tried to impress the people of Marshfield with the importance of obtaining the services of a superintendent, and said, 14

"It is claimed and we believe with reason, that we can ~~never~~ get the best results from our schools until the supervision is imposed upon one competent person, who can give all his time to the work and whom the Committee may hold responsible to carry out their instructions,--in other words, a Superintendent of Schools. During the past year, we have had the matter under consideration, and have met the Committee of the Town of Duxbury who are decidedly in favor of such an arrangement. It is hoped that the adjoining towns will take favorable action in the premises and that our own citizens will invest their Committee with





authority to Act, and give their support to this measure, which we feel will tend towards a closer and more accurate oversight of schools, resulting in a greater uniformity of school work and a more profitable expenditure of money."

The Marshfield Town Warrant for the meeting of March 18, 1889, contained two articles relative to the formation of the union. They were:

Article 15--To see if the Town will unite with the towns of Duxbury, Scituate, or with either one of them, or with any other towns, for the purpose of the employment of a Superintendent of Schools.

Article 16--Will the Town raise and appropriate a sum not less than \$250 as its proportion for the support of a Superintendent of Schools?

After the union had been formed the committee had the following comments to make in regard to it. In its report for the 1889-90 school year, the committee said, <sup>15</sup>

"As recommended by your Committee in the report of last year, our Town voted to unite with the towns of Scituate and Duxbury in the employment of a Superintendent of Schools. A meeting was held which resulted in the choice of Mr. F. W. Sweet of Portsmouth, New Hampshire, who occupied the position for a short time and then resigned. At a subsequent meeting, held to fill the vacancy caused by Mr. Sweet's resignation, Mr. Edwin H. Watson, an experienced educator and graduate of Dartmouth College, was chosen for the unexpired term of office to which Mr. Sweet was elected. The Superintendent's salary, of \$1250, is paid jointly by the three towns. Marshfield pays \$400, and will receive in the sum of \$150, and also a proportion of \$500 for the pay of teachers; the same to be distributed on the basis of the average public school attendance of the three towns during the same year.

Experimental as the employment of a Superintendent may have seemed to some, the result has proved satisfactory. Teacher's meetings have been held; a course of study outlined and adopted; and everything conducive to the advancement of the individual scholar has been offered through the mediumship of faithful and efficient instructors.





An article appeared in the warrants of 1890 and again in 1891 which said,

"What action will the Town take relative to the employment of a superintendent of schools?"

Each time the Town decided in favor of the Superintendent.

After 1891, the Town of Marshfield evidently accepted the superintendent of schools as one of the necessary town employees and made no further comments in regard to the advisability of retaining him. The report of the school committee for the 1890-91 school year said, 16

"The advantage of employing a superintendent, that was anticipated by the friends of this change in our system, is already, to a good extent, apparent, and we are sure that the beneficial results will be still more evident if we act favorably upon the continuance of the present plan. The work in our schools has been systematized. An excellent, well-balanced course has been adopted. Teachers have a definite amount to accomplish with each class in each term, and they have a person to make periodical examination to see what has been done. This laying out of work, including not only the subjects to be taught and results to be obtained, but giving the best methods of training and teaching manifestly requires a knowledge which no one can be expected to possess, unless he himself is a student in the art of teaching. We use this phrase, "art of teaching," advisedly. There is a right and wrong way, or rather there is a right way and there are many wrong ways to do the work of the school-room. We don't want any hap-hazard experimental methods. In a manufactory of any importance, whatever the product, we expect to find a superintendent having special knowledge of his business. How much more is special or professional knowledge required when the output is designed to be young men and women, well-started in their





physical, mental, and moral education.

Our superintendent is now serving his second year in our School-Superintendent district. He is industrious and efficient, and has proved himself worthy of our confidence."

In the Town of Scituate, the first comments which the school Committee had to offer on the question of employing a superintendent were made in their report of the 1886-87 school year, in which they said, <sup>17</sup>

"Our schools are generally doing well, and one thing we should be thankful for, is that we have so many teachers of experience. Were it otherwise, it would be almost an imperative duty for the town to employ an educated, practical teacher for a Superintendent for (to use the words of another), 'I do not find that a novice in teaching coming from the High School, has much knowledge of the philosophy of his work, or much skill in teaching elementary branches to the young children', and as they thus come to work without a Normal Training constant and almost daily supervision should be given until they require the necessary knowledge and experience. But we are fortunate in this respect, as nearly all of our teachers are veterans in this work and the few who are not are doing good work".

This report seems to indicate that the committee at Scituate was fairly-well satisfied with the type of a school system they had and that they were not contemplating the necessity of hiring a superintendent. The future reports of the committee have nothing to say on the subject until the report of 1889-90 which was the year after the union was formed.

In the Warrant for March 1889, Article 24 was as follows:

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17 Town Report--Scituate--1886--p. 6





"To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$250.00 towards employing a Superintendent of Schools in conjunction with Marshfield and Duxbury."

The town voted in favor of this article. It is not known how much or what kind of publicity there was given to this article in attempting to secure a favorable vote on it.

The Committees report of 1889-90 is somewhat similar to that of Duxbury's for the same year. It reads, 18

"In April, a joint committee of the three towns of Marshfield, Duxbury, and Scituate elected as Superintendent of Schools, under the new law, Frank W. Forest of Portsmouth, New Hampshire, a graduate of Bridgewater Normal. Being near the close of the school year, his work was necessarily limited. At the beginning of the school year, in September he was called to Bridgewater at a higher salary. The committee immediately secured the services of E. H. Watson, a graduate of Dartmouth, for the past 5 years, Master of the High School and Superintendent of Schools at Beaver, Pennsylvania.

He entered upon the work with a thorough knowledge of the "new education" and its practical adaptation to primary, grammar, and high school work.

A course of study has been adopted, teacher's meetings held, and a strong effort made to awaken a true interest and spirit of teaching among the teachers, as well as to instruct them in the best methods of class work.

The teachers have, in most cases, responded cordially and intelligently to the efforts made in their behalf."

In the report of the committee in 1890-91, two points were discussed: first, the advisability of retaining the Superintendent; second, an attempt was made to





distinguish between the duties of the committee and those of the Superintendent. The report reads, <sup>19</sup>

"The committee hope that the office of Superintendent may be continued another year. The future of the town depends on the character of the children, and shall not the town give to them the best mental, moral and physical training that the times afford?

This can only be done by employing trained teachers and competent supervision.

In regard to the distinctive duties of committee and Superintendent, the law says nothing: but it would seem advisable that the Committee should retain the charge of prudential affairs. Professor John Fiske, in his book on Civil Government says: "The School Committee must visit the schools once a month at least, and make a report to the town every year. It is for them to decide what text-books are to be used. They examine candidate for the position of teachers, and issue certificate to them. If the amount of work to be done seems to require it, the Committee appoints a Superintendent of schools. He is a sort of lieutenant of the School Committee, and, under its general direction, carries on the detailed work of supervision".

The reports of 1891-92 and 1892-93 contain very little discussion on the topic of supervision. Evidently, the Superintendency system was becoming well enough established so that future discussion was unnecessary. The report of 1891-92 said, <sup>20</sup>

"The careful superintendent of the schools, it is well known, is under the immediate direction of the Superintendent whose duties when faithfully discharged render the work of the School Committee less arduous and exacting. The earnest co-operation of the Superintendent and Committee with the teachers is gradually bringing the schools to that high standard of excellence so earnestly desired by both parents and citizens.

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19 Scituate Report of 1890-91  
20 1891-92





The report of 1892-93 read, 21

"The immediate supervision of the schools is under the direct charge of a Superintendent who, working under the direction of the Committee, and in perfect harmony with the teachers has brought our schools up to a high standard of excellence.

"The school committee, or some one or more of them, for the purpose of organizing and making a careful examination of the schools, and of ascertaining that the scholars are properly supplied with books, shall visit all the public schools in the town on each day during the first week after the opening of each school, and also on some day during the week preceding the closing of the same; and shall also for the same purposes visit, without giving previous notice thereof to the instructors, all the private schools in the town once in a month, and they shall, at such examinations, inquire into the regulations and discipline of the school, and the habits and proficiency of the scholars."

The first law pertaining to the superintendency and system of school supervision was passed by the State legislature in 1834, and it is possible for cities and towns to require their school committees to employ superintendents. The law read,

Section 1. "The several cities and towns in this State shall have the right to employ a superintendent of schools."

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21 Scituate Report of School Committee 1892-93 p. 43

1. Acts of 1834 Chap. 33 Section 26  
2. Acts of 1834 Chapter 314





### CHAPTER III

#### Laws Relating To Union Superintendencies

Supervision in the early days was something done only by the school committee and other interested persons simply because of their interest in keeping the schools up to as high a standard as possible.

There were no laws requiring anyone to visit a school house at any time in the year. The first law compelling visitations was passed in 1834 and it required the school committee to visit the schools monthly. The law stated, <sup>1</sup>

"The school committee, or some one or more of them, for the purpose of organizing and making a careful examination of the schools, and of ascertaining that the scholars are properly supplied with books, shall visit all the public schools in the town on some day during the first week after the opening of such schools, and also on some day during the two weeks preceding the close of the same; and shall also for the same purposes visit, without giving previous notice thereof to the instructors, all the public schools in the town once in a month, and they shall, at such examinations, inquire into the regulation and discipline of the school, and the habits and proficiency of the scholars."

The first law pertaining to the superintendency system of school supervision was passed by the State Legislature in 1854 making it possible for cities and towns to require their school committees to employ superintendents. The law read, <sup>2</sup>

Section 1. "The several cities and towns in this Commonwealth, by an ordinance of the city government

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1 Acts of 1834 Chap. 39 Section 26

2 Acts of 1854 Chapter 314

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The first law pertaining to the superintendency

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superintendents. The law read,

Section 1. "The several cities and towns in this Commonwealth, by an ordinance of the city government



in said cities, or by a vote of the qualified voters of said towns in legal town meeting, may annually require the school committee to appoint a superintendent of public schools, to have the care and supervision of said schools, under the direction and control of said school committee; the salary of such superintendent to be fixed by the city government of said cities, or the inhabitants of said towns, at a legal meeting shall direct; and in every city and town in which such superintendent shall be appointed, the school committee shall receive no compensation, unless otherwise provided for by the city governments of said cities, or by a vote of said town.

Section 2. Every city in this Commonwealth, whose act of incorporation has already provided, or shall hereafter provide, for the choice of a superintendent of schools, shall be exempt from the operation of this act."

An amendment to this law of 1854 was passed in 1856 which stated that the school committee of any town or city could not receive any salary unless the city or town expressly provided for it. The amendment read, <sup>3</sup>

Section 1. The first section of the three hundred and fourteenth chapter of the acts of the year eighteen hundred and fifty-four, shall, as applied to cities, be construed to mean that the several cities, by an ordinance of the city government, may require the school committee to appoint a superintendent of public schools, annually.

Section 2. In any city which has heretofore passed an ordinance requiring the school committee to appoint a superintendent of public schools, annually, the school committee in such city shall hereafter receive no compensation; and, in any city which may hereafter pass such an ordinance, the school committee in such city shall receive no compensation after the passage of such ordinance, unless in either case the city shall otherwise expressly provide.

Section 3. This act shall take effect from and after its passage.





This Act, as amended, appears in modified form in the General Status and is expressed in somewhat simpler form. It reads, <sup>4</sup>

"Any town annually by legal vote, and any city by an ordinance of the city council, may require the school committee annually to appoint a superintendent of public schools, who, under the direction and control of said committee, shall have the care and supervision of the schools, with such salary as the city government or town may determine; and in every city in which such ordinance is in force, and in every town in which such superintendent is appointed, the school committee shall receive no compensation, unless otherwise provided by such city government or town."

In 1860, an act was passed providing for a minimum salary for the superintendents. It does not seem peculiar that it was difficult to obtain the services of men with ability when one stops to consider this minimum salary. The law read, <sup>5</sup>

"Section 1. The compensation of superintendents of public schools, provided for in the thirty-fifth section of the thirty-eighth chapter of the General Statutes, passed December 28, 1859, shall in no case be less than one dollar and fifty cents for each day of actual service.

Section 2. This act shall take effect from its passage."

The codified laws of 1870, chapter 117, Section 35 state exactly the same law as the 1859-60 code in chapter 38 section 35. Two amendments were passed to this law in 1873; one dealing with the term election of superintendents, the other with the determination of his salary.

Chapter 108 arranged matters so that the super-

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4 General Statutes of Massachusetts 1859 Chapter 38 Section 35

5 Acts of 1860 Chapter 101





intendent did not need to be elected annually which meant that his contract might be made to cover a much longer period. The law reads, <sup>6</sup>

"Section 1. Section 35 of Chapter 38 of the General Statutes, is amended by striking from the first line the word "annually".

Chapter 109 took the determination of the superintendent's salary out of the hands of the city and town governments and placed it under the jurisdiction of the school committee. The amendment reads, <sup>7</sup>

"The school committee of any city or town, required to appoint a superintendent of public schools, shall have authority to determine the salary of such superintendent, anything in section thirty-five of chapter thirty-eight of the General Statutes to the contrary notwithstanding."

In 1870, a law was passed permitting the union of towns for the employment of a superintendent of public schools. This law did not provide for any state aid. The law reads, <sup>8</sup>

"Section 1. Any two or more towns may, by a vote of each, form a district for the purpose of employing a superintendent of public schools therein, who shall perform in each town the duties prescribed by law.

Section 2. Such superintendent shall be annually appointed by a joint committee composed of the chairman and secretary of the school committee of each of the towns in said district, who shall determine the relative amount of service to be performed by him in each town, fix his salary, and apportion the amount thereof to be paid by the several towns, and certify the same to the treasurer of each town. Said joint committee shall, for the purposes named in this section, be held to be the agents of each town composing the district aforesaid."

In 1874 the Legislature passed the following amend-

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6 Acts of 1873 Chapter 108

7 Acts of 1873 Chapter 108

8 Acts of 1870 Chapter 183





ments to section thirty-five of Chapter thirty-eight,<sup>9</sup>

"The school committee of any city may appoint and fix the compensation of a superintendent of public schools, a majority vote of the whole board being necessary for that purpose; and in every city where a superintendent is appointed, the school committee shall receive no compensation."

The next law pertaining to superintendencies was the law of 1888 which offered state aid to small towns if they would form unions for the employment of superintendents. The law reads,<sup>10</sup>

"An Act To Aid Small Towns To Provide Themselves With School Superintendents."

Section 1. Any two or more towns the valuation of each of which does not exceed 2 million 5 hundred thousand dollars, and the aggregate number of schools in all of which is not more than 50 nor less than thirty, may, by vote of the several towns, unite for the purpose of the employment of a superintendent of schools under the provisions of this act.

Section 2. When such a union has been effected, the school committees of the towns comprising the union shall form a joint committee, and for the purposes of this act said joint committee shall be held to be the agents of each town comprising the union. Said committee shall meet annually in joint convention in the month of April at a day and place agreed upon by the chairman of the committee of the several towns comprising the union, and shall organize by the choice of a chairman and secretary. They shall choose, by ballot, a superintendent of schools; determine the relative amount of service to be performed by him in each town; fix his salary, and apportion the amount thereof to be paid by the several towns, and certify such amount to the treasurer of each town.

Section 3. Whenever the chairman and secretary of the joint committee shall certify to the state auditor, under oath, that a union has been effected as herein provided, that the towns, in addition to an amount equal to the average of the total sum paid by the

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9 Acts 1874 Chapter 272  
10 Acts 1888 Chapter 431





the several towns for schools during the three years next preceding unitedly have raised by taxation and appropriated a sum not less than \$750 for the support of a superintendent of schools, and that under provisions of this act a superintendent of schools has been employed for one year, a warrant shall be drawn upon the treasurer of the commonwealth for the payment of \$1000, one-half of which amount shall be paid for the salary of the superintendent and the remaining one-half shall be apportioned and distributed on the basis of the average public school attendance of the towns forming such district for the year next preceding, which amount shall be paid for the salaries of teachers employed in the public schools within such district.

Section 4. A sum not exceeding \$12,500 shall be annually appropriated for the purposes of this act.

Section 5. The provisions of section 43 of Chapter 44 of the Public Statutes respecting the service of school committees without pay in towns wherein a superintendent is appointed, shall not apply to towns uniting in the employment of a superintendent under the provisions of this act."

An amendment to this act was passed in 1890 which increased the amount of money appropriated annually for the aid of the unions. The amendment reads,<sup>11</sup>

"Section 4 of Chapter 431 of the acts of 1888 is hereby amended by striking out, in the first and second lines, the words "\$12,500", and inserting in place thereof the words: \$27,000,--so that the section shall read as follows: Section 4. A sum not exceeding \$27,000 shall be annually appropriated for the purposes of this act."

The next important piece of legislation affecting the unions was passed in 1900 and made mandatory what had hitherto been optional. This law required towns with less than a certain valuation to enter a union be-

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<sup>11</sup> Acts 1890 Chapter 379

the several towns for schools during the three years next preceding unitarily have raised by taxation and appropriated a sum not less than \$750 for the support of a superintendent of schools, and that under provisions of this act a superintendent of schools has been employed for one year, a warrant shall be drawn upon the treasurer of the commonwealth for the payment of \$1000, one-half of which amount shall be paid for the salary of the superintendent and the remaining one-half shall be apportioned and distributed on the basis of the average public school attendance of the towns forming each district for the year next preceding, which amount shall be paid for the salaries of teachers employed in the public schools within each district.

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Section 5. The provisions of section 43 of Chapter 44 of the Public Statutes respecting the service of school committees without pay in towns wherein a superintendent is appointed, shall not apply to towns unitarily in the employment of a superintendent under the provisions of this act.

An amendment to the act passed in 1880 which increased the amount of money appropriated

annually for the aid of the unions. The amendment reads, "I

"Section 4 of Chapter 441 of the acts of 1880 is hereby amended by striking out, in the first and second lines, the words 'the sum of \$12,000', and inserting in place thereof the words: '\$27,000,--so that the section shall read as follows: Section 4. A sum not exceeding \$27,000 shall be annually appropriated for the purpose of this act."

The next important piece of legislation affecting the unions was passed in 1900 and gave monetary aid had hitherto been defunct. This law required towns with less than a certain valuation to enter a union with



fore a specified time. The law stated, <sup>12</sup>

"The school committees of towns the valuation of which is less than two million five hundred thousand dollars may, and after July first in the year nineteen hundred and two shall, form unions under the provisions of chapter four hundred and sixty-six of the acts of the year eighteen hundred and ninety-eight."

This law did not give the State Department of Education the power to form unions; consequently, many of the unions formed in order to comply with the law were not as ideally situated as they might have been had there been some guiding factor to help shape them. In 1903, a law was passed which gave the State Department some authority in the formation of the unions. The law read, <sup>13</sup>

"The state board of education is hereby authorized to form or re-adjust unions of towns for the employment of superintendents of schools whenever in its judgment it becomes imperatively necessary to include a town which otherwise is unable to comply with the law. In carrying out the provisions of this act the board may allow the formation of unions with a number of schools less than that required by section thirty-three of chapter fourty-two of the Revised Laws, and in no case shall the re-adjustment deprive any town of its right to aid under the law."

In 1904, a law was passed entitled, "An Act relative to the qualifications of superintendents of schools." It said, <sup>14</sup>

"In all superintendency unions in which any part of the expense of the Superintendent is born by the Commonwealth the state board of education shall determine, by examination or otherwise, the qualifications of candidates for the position of superintendent of public schools; and, after the first day of January in the year 1905, no person shall be elected to such position who does not hold a certificate of fitness and competency from said board: provided, however, that this act shall not apply to any superintendency union in which one town

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12 Acts of 1900 Chapter 248

13 Acts of 1903 Chapter 299

14 Acts of 1904 Chapter 215







does not receive aid from the Commonwealth for expense of a superintendent, until the termination of the contract, if any, existing between such towns at the time of the passage of this act."

This law of 1904 was expanded in 1913 evidently in an attempt to improve the stability of tenure and salary of the superintendents. Perhaps it was believed that better men would be attracted to the position by this added certainty. The law said, 15

"Such superintendents of schools shall be employed for a term of three years, and his salary shall not be reduced during such term. Failure of a superintendent during his term of office to receive a certificate as provided by chapter two hundred and fifteen of the acts of the year nineteen hundred and four, upon the expiration of a prior certificate, shall thereby vacate his office. He may be removed from office by a two thirds vote of the full membership of the joint committee, and with the consent of the board of education to such dismissal, whereupon his salary shall cease."

In 1912, a law was passed for the purpose of giving equality of representation on the joint committee of a union. The law read, 16

"Any shcoool committee consisting of more than three members shall be represented on the joint committee by its chairman and two members chosen by said school committee."

The laws governing the unions were codified in 1926 and revised in 1932. Of course the code contains the laws that were passed from the beginning of the system. It seems necessary to include a direct copy

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15 Acts of 1911 Chapter 384  
16 Acts of 1912 Chapter

does not receive aid from the Commonwealth for expenses of a superintendent, until the termination of the contract, if any, existing between such towns at the time of the passage of this act."

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the laws that were passed from the beginning of the

system. It seems necessary to include a direct copy



of the laws in the 1932 code.<sup>17</sup>

"Section 61. Unions of towns for employment of superintendent. The school committees of two or more towns, each having a valuation less than two million five hundred thousand dollars, and having an aggregate maximum of seventy-five, and an aggregate minimum of twenty-five, schools, and the committees of four or more such towns, having said maximum but irrespective of said minimum, shall form a union for employing a superintendent of schools. A town whose valuation exceeds said amount, may participate in such a union but otherwise subject to this section. Such a union shall not be dissolved except by vote of the school committee representing a majority of the participating towns with the consent of the department, nor by reason of any change in valuation or the number of schools.

Section 62. Formation or re-adjustment of unions by department. The department may form or re-adjust such unions whenever it becomes necessary to include one or more towns otherwise unable to comply with the preceding section, and in so doing may disregard the minimum number of schools prescribed therein, but no such re-adjustment shall deprive a town of its right to aid under section sixty-five.

Section 63. Joint committee. Organization and duties. The school committees of such towns shall, for the purposes of the union, be a joint committee and shall be the agent of each participating town, provided that any school committee of more than three members shall be represented therein by its chairman and two of its members chosen by it. The joint committee shall annually, in April, meet at a day and place agreed upon by the chairman of the constituent committees, and shall organize by choosing a chairman and a secretary. It shall employ for a three-year term, a superintendent of schools, determine the relative amount of service to be rendered by him in each town, fix his salary, which shall not be reduced during his term, apportion the payment thereof in accordance with section sixty-five among the several towns and certify the respective shares to the several town treasurers. He may be removed, with the consent of the department, by a two thirds vote of the full membership of the joint committee.

of the law in the 1933 code.

"Section 61. Union of towns for employment of superintendant. The school committee of two or more towns, each having a valuation less than two million five hundred thousand dollars, and having an aggregate maximum of seventy-five, and an aggregate number of twenty-five, scholars, and the committee of each or more such towns, having held a union for employment of said superintendant, shall form a union for employment of superintendants of schools. A town whose valuation exceeds said amount, may participate in such a union but otherwise subject to this section. Such a union shall not be dissolved except by vote of the school committee representing a majority of the participating towns with the consent of the department, nor by reason of any change in valuation or the number of schools.

Section 62. Provision for re-adjustment of unions by department. The department may from time to time adjust such unions whenever it becomes necessary to include one or more towns otherwise unable to comply with the existing section, and in so doing may disregard the minimum number of schools prescribed therein, but no such re-adjustment shall deprive a town of its right to file under section sixty-five.

Section 63. Joint committee. Organization and duties. The school committee of each town shall, for the purpose of the union, be a joint committee and shall be the agent of each participating town, provided that any school committee of more than three members shall be represented equally by the chairman and two of its members who shall be annually elected and placed agreed upon by the chairman of the committee. The joint committee shall be organized by choosing a chairman and a secretary. It shall employ for a three-year term, a re-employment of scholars, determine the relative amount of services to be rendered by the in each town, fix the salary, which shall not be reduced during his term, according to the payment stated in accordance with section sixty-five among the several towns and certify the respective shares to the several town treasurers. He may be removed, with the consent of the department, by a two-thirds vote of the full membership of the joint committee.



Section 64. Salary of union superintendent. The salary of the superintendent in such a union shall be not less than the amounts provided in the following schedule: Twenty-two hundred dollars for the first year of service, twenty-three hundred dollars for the second year, twenty-four hundred dollars for the third year, twenty-five hundred dollars for the fourth year. If his salary is not in excess of twenty-nine hundred dollars, his union shall, and otherwise may, reimburse him for his actual traveling expenses incurred in the discharge of his duties, but such reimbursement may be limited by the committee to four hundred dollars a year.

Section 65. State aid to unions. When the chairman and secretary of the joint committee certify to the comptroller, on oath, that the towns unitedly have employed a superintendent of schools for the year ending on June thirteenth, and have complied with section sixty-three, a warrant shall, upon the approval of the department, be drawn upon the state treasurer for the payment of two thirds of the sum of the following amounts:

(1) the amount paid to the superintendent as salary not including any such amount in excess of twenty-five hundred dollars, and (2) the amount reimbursed to the superintendent for traveling expenses not including any such amount in excess of four hundred dollars. The amount stated in the warrant shall be apportioned and distributed among the towns forming the union in proportion to the amounts expended by them for the salary and traveling expenses of the superintendent; provided, that the amount apportioned to any town whose valuation then exceeds four million five hundred thousand or to any town whose valuation exceeded two million five hundred thousand at the time of its entry into a union, shall be retained by the commonwealth.

Section 66. Qualifications of superintendents in state-aided unions. The department shall not approve the claim to reimbursement under the preceding section unless the superintendent, for the entire period of whose service such reimbursement is claimed, held a certificate of the department certifying to his qualifications as determined by examination or otherwise.

Section 67. Superintendent forbidden to receive pay for obtaining positions. A superintendent of schools who accepts any commission, fee, compensation, or reward of any kind for obtaining for any person a position as teacher in the public schools shall be punished by a fine of not less than fifty nor more than five hundred dollars."



Section 84. Salary of union superintendent. The salary of the superintendent in such a union shall be not less than the amount provided in the following schedule: Twenty-two hundred dollars for the first year of service; twenty-three hundred dollars for the second year; twenty-four hundred dollars for the third year; twenty-five hundred dollars for the fourth year. If his salary is not in excess of twenty-nine hundred dollars, his union shall, and otherwise may, reimburse him for his actual traveling expenses incurred in the discharge of his duties, but such reimbursement may be limited by the committee to four hundred dollars a year.

Section 85. State aid to unions. When the chairman and secretary of the joint committee certify to the comptroller, on oath, that the towns entitled have employed a superintendent of schools for the year ending on June thirtieth, and have complied with section eighty-three, a warrant shall, upon the approval of the department, be drawn upon the state treasurer for the payment of two thirds of the sum of the following amounts: (1) the amount paid to the superintendent as salary not including any such amount in excess of twenty-five hundred dollars; and (2) the amount reimbursed to the superintendent for traveling expenses not including any such amount in excess of four hundred dollars. The amount stated in the warrant shall be apportioned and distributed among the towns forming the union in proportion to the amounts expended by them for the salary and traveling expenses of the superintendent; provided, that the amount apportioned to any town whose valuation shall exceed four million five hundred thousand or to any town whose valuation exceeded two million five hundred thousand at the time of its entry into a union, shall be retained by the commonwealth.

Section 86. Qualifications of superintendents in state-aided unions. The department shall not approve the claim to reimbursement under the preceding section unless the superintendent, for the entire period of whose service such reimbursement is claimed, held a certificate of the department certifying to his qualifications as determined by examination or otherwise.

Section 87. Superintendent forbidden to receive pay for certain positions. A superintendent of schools who accepts any commission, fee, remuneration, or reward of any kind for obtaining for any person a position as teacher in the public schools shall be punished by a fine of not less than fifty nor more than five hundred dollars.



## CHAPTER IV

### CERTIFICATION OF UNION SUPERINTENDENTS

When supervision by superintendents was first being sponsored, the qualifications of the candidates were left entirely to the various school committees. None of the early laws permitting the employment of superintendents made any mention regarding the qualifications he should have. Even the law of 1888, in which the state was offering to grant aid to those towns that would form unions, had nothing to say concerning the qualifications of the superintendents which the state money was being used to employ.

Perhaps these requirements were not made by law because so few men were really qualified when the system of supervision was started. In 1894, Mr. Martin remarked <sup>1</sup> that the most serious difficulty which the system had to face was the lack of suitable men to fill the positions.

It was not until 1904 that a law was passed which required all union superintendents to hold a certificate of fitness and competency granted by the state board of education before they could be elected to office. This certification of the superintendent was necessary for the union to secure the state aid offered under the law of 1888.

When this law was passed, it was necessary for the state department to formulate some method of determining the fitness and competency of the men for the position.

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<sup>1</sup> Martin--Ibid--p. 221

## ORGANIZATION OF UNION EXPERIMENTERS

When supervision by superintendents first began, the qualifications of the candidates were left entirely to the various school committees. None of the early laws permitting the employment of superintendents made any mention regarding the qualifications he should

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Perhaps these requirements were not made by law because so few men were really qualified when the system of supervision was started. In 1884, Mr. Martin remarked that the most serious difficulty which the system had to face was the lack of suitable men to fill the positions. It was not until 1894 that a law was passed which re-

quired all union superintendents to hold a certificate of fitness and competency granted by the state board of education before they could be elected to office. This certification of the superintendent was necessary for the union to secure the state aid offered under the law of 1888. Then this law was passed it was necessary for the state department to formulate some method of determining the fitness and competency of the men for the position.



The law simply stated that, "the state board of education should determine by examination or otherwise" the fitness of the candidates. The secretary of the board of education was authorized to carry out the provisions of the law. As a result, the candidates were examined in Boston and Pittsfield on October 7, 1904. This examination was limited to persons who were not serving as superintendents in the state at that time. Personal records and testimonials as to character and experience were filed with the state board. Examinations papers were written in answer to questions on the school laws of the state, and on principles of school management and supervision. Nine persons applied, and were examined at the time of the first examination. Five of them were granted certificates.

The form of the certificate which, was granted at that time was as follows: <sup>1</sup>

"This is to certify that \_\_\_\_\_ is approved by the State Board of Education for \_\_\_\_\_ years for the position of Superintendent of Schools in the superintendency unions in Massachusetts."

Boston, \_\_\_\_\_, 19\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ Secretary

At that time, either the State Department ~~for~~ the candidates for the positions, or both parties saw a need for some sort of special preparation for these candidates; consequently, the Secretary of the State Department saw fit to include in the sixty-eighth annual

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<sup>1</sup> Sixty-eighth Annual Report of the Board of Education 1903-4 p. 113





report, a recommendation that those who wished to make a serious study of the work should spend five full weeks for at least three or four succeeding summers at Hyannis in order to study certain phases of work which was outlined as follows: <sup>2</sup>

"A COURSE OF STUDY FOR SUPERINTENDENTS OF SCHOOLS"

First Summer

Supervision .....	3 weeks
The making of elementary courses of study.....	2 weeks
Psychology.....	5 weeks

Second Summer

Pedagogy.....	5 weeks
Methods in Georgraphy.....	5 weeks

Third Summer

Biology, with method in nature study....	5 weeks
Methods in arithmetic.....	5 weeks

Fourth Summer

Industrial Education.....	5 weeks
History of Education.....	5 weeks
Alternates: methods in music, drawing and English.	

Note: In connection with each subject some opportunity was given for observation of children at work."

In those days the state department felt that every new superintendent needed help along three distinct lines which were: 1. The administrative duties of his office; 2. The making of courses of studies; 3. The training of teachers in modern pedagogy. The course of study which the department recommended was designed to give the

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<sup>2</sup> Sixty-eighth Annual Report of the Board of Education 1903-1904 p. 114





superintendents as much help as possible along these lines.

The first certificates which the board granted were for one year and were renewable at the pleasure of the board. Later, some of the certificates were given for three or four years. These term certificates continued to be granted until July 1, 1913, and those persons who had received them prior to that date were given them after that date. All other applicants who were approved after that date were given a preliminary certificate which was valid for three years. The three year period was dated from the time the holder of the certificate entered his work as a superintendent in the state. These preliminary certificates were granted either on examination or on credentials. The requirements for certification by examinations were: 1. The completion of a college or normal school education, or the equivalent; 2. Familiarity with educational theory, practice, and history, and with the school laws of Massachusetts as shown by an oral examination; 3. A record of at least two years of satisfactory teaching or supervision, or both; 4. The candidate had to pass written examinations in the following subjects: (a) School laws of Massachusetts; (b) School organization, administration, and supervision; (c) Aims, courses and methods in elementary schools with especial reference to rural schools; (d) Aims, courses and methods in high schools; (e) History of education and educational sociology.





The requirements for the preliminary certificate to be given by certification were: 1. A normal school diploma, or bachelor's degree, or the equivalent education; 2. At least three years experience as a superintendent of schools, the successful character of which had to be established by evidence acceptable to the board. 3. The completion of courses in an approved college or university equivalent in amount to, at least, nine year hours of work, including the subject of school administration and supervision; and educational theory and practice. 4. The candidate had also to present a thesis on some phase of the work of a superintendent of schools.

In 1916, the Secretary made the first comment in regard to a Permanent, or Life certificate. It was to be given to any superintendent of schools in Massachusetts who could meet certain conditions such as: 1. Being the holder of a superintendent's Term or Preliminary certificate; 2. Having served successfully as a superintendent of schools in Massachusetts for at least three continuous years subsequent to securing a Term or Preliminary certificate. 3. (a) Completing studies in educational theory equivalent to one semester course; (b) Presentation of a thesis on some topic in supervision, school organization or management.





No changes were made in these methods of certifying candidates until the revision which provides for the present method of certification.

This method became effective on December 1, 1933 and stated that term certificates, valid for three years, might be granted on written examination to candidates who met the following requirements: <sup>1</sup>

1. Completion of an approved four year course in college, teachers college, or normal school, or the equivalent.

2. Graduates of college ~~were~~ required to show approved credit for not less than eighteen semester hours~~e~~ of study in the field of education. For the purpose of meeting this requirement, candidates may offer credit for summer school or extension courses in education.

3. A minimum of five years' satisfactory experience in school work, at least two of which must have been in the field of school supervision of administration; or both.

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<sup>1</sup> Bulletin of the State Department Entitled, "Regulations For Certification of Superintendents of Schools in Superintendency Unions."





4. The candidate must pass a written examination in the following subjects: School organization, administration, and supervision; aims, courses, and methods in secondary schools; history of education and educational sociology; school laws of Massachusetts.

5. The Department may require some further evidence to establish that the candidate possesses the personal and professional qualifications requisite for a superintendent of schools.

It is necessary to get the consent of the Department of Education before you can even become a candidate for certification. If the Department has reason to believe that a person is not ready for the position, or is not the type for it, the applicant may not be permitted to take the examinations.





## CHAPTER V

### QUALIFICATIONS OF PRESENT UNION SUPERINTENDENT

<sup>1</sup>  
Mr. Benner found in 1923 that 1 union superintendent had no college or normal school education; that 6 had attended some college or normal school but had not graduated; 10 were graduates of normal schools; 1 was a graduate of normal school and had done some college work; 41 were college graduates; 11 had graduate degrees; and 5 were graduates of both a normal school and a college. He found also that 32.7% of the superintendents had had no teaching experience in the elementary school; and that 17.3% had had no experience in the high school.

The study shows that all the union superintendents have attended college; that only 3 had no degree; 2 are graduates of normal school; three have graduated at normal school, and have taken other degrees in college; 41 are college graduates; and 29 had graduate degrees; that 66.0% have had an average of 4.65 years of teaching experience in elementary schools; that 88.7% have taught for an average of 8.1 years in high school; that 69.81% taught mathematics in high school; 60.48% taught science; 41.51% taught history; 34.0% taught English; 22.64% taught Latin; and 15.1% taught French. Some other subjects were mentioned only once and are not included in this study. Table number 1 shows a comparison of the findings in these two studies.

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1 Thomas E. Benner--Doctors Thesis





Table Number 1

Comparison of Educational Qualifications of Union  
Superintendents in 1923 and 1935

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In 1923		In 1935
1	Number who had attended no college or normal school	0
6	Number who had attended some college or normal school but had not graduated	3
10	Number who were graduates of normal schools	2
1	Number who were graduates of normal schools and had done some college work	
41	number of college graduates	48
11	number who had graduate degrees	29
5	number who were graduates of both normal school and college	3
67.3	per cent who had taught in elementary school	66.0
82.7	per cent who had taught in high school	88.7

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A comparison of degrees, average salaries paid, and the average ages show that the three men who have no degrees get an average salary of \$3900 and average 56.66 years of age; the two who have only normal school diplomas get an average of \$3075 and their average age is 59 years; the three who have diplomas and degrees get an average of \$3066.66 and average





46.66 years in age; the 19 who have only the B.A. or B.S. degree get an average of \$3105.50 and their average age is 45.79 years; the 29 who have graduate degrees get an average of \$3425.19 and their average age is 47.44 years; and the two men who have three degrees get an average of \$3450 and their average age is 44.5 years. This study shows that the men who have no degrees get the highest salaries; next, are the men with three degrees; next, those with graduate degrees; then, those with one degree; then, those who have normal school diplomas; last, comes the three men who have both a normal school diploma and a degree. Table number 2 shows these results.

Table Number 2

Comparison of Degrees, Average salaries, and Average  
Ages of Union Superintendents

No. of Superintendents	degrees held	average salary	average age
3	none	\$3900	56.66
2	three	3450	44.5
29	graduate	3425.19	47.44
19	BS or BA	3105.50	45.79
2	N.S. Diploma	3075	59
3	N.S. Diploma and degree	3066.66	46.66

This study shows that the average age at which the present union superintendents were certified was 32.41 years, and that

46.55 years in age; the 19 who have only the B.A. or B.S. degrees get an average of \$2105.50 and their average age is 43.73 years; the 39 who have graduate degrees get an average of \$3435.19 and their average age is 47.44 years; and the two men who have three degrees get an average of \$3435 and their average age is 46.5 years. This study shows that the men who have no degrees get the highest salaries; next, are the men with three degrees; next, those with graduate degrees; then, those with one degree; then, those who have no school diploma; last, comes the three men who have both a normal school diploma and a degree. Table number 2 shows these results.

Table Number 2

Comparison of Degrees, Average Salaries, and Average Ages of Union Superintendents

No. of Superintendents	Degrees held	Average salary	Average age
2	none	\$3000	46.55
2	three	\$450	44.5
39	graduate	\$3435.19	47.44
19	B.S. or B.A.	\$2105.50	43.73
3	W.S. Diploma	\$3075	43
3	W.S. Diploma and degree	\$3085.66	45.55

This study shows that the average age at which the present union superintendents were certified was 38.41 years, and that



the average age at which they received employment as union superintendents was 33.94 years. This seems to indicate that most of the men who were entering the profession do so in about one year after they are certified.

Those men who have only normal school diplomas are the oldest; next, comes those who have no degree or diploma; next, is those who have graduate degrees; next, comes those who have normal school diplomas and degrees; next, is those who have only one degree; and youngest of all, are the two men who have three degrees.

This study shows also that the average salary of the ten men who are sixty years old or over is \$3307 and the average salary of the ten men who are 40 years old or younger is \$3352, which means that the younger men are being paid a small amount more than the older ones.

The study shows also that the average number of hours of work in educational courses which superintendents have taken is 47.06 and that 35 of the superintendents had had supervisory and administrative experience before they became superintendents: 24 as high school principals, and 11 as elementary principals. The study shows that 22 of the superintendents have been to school since 1920, and have taken part-time courses and degrees; 20 others have not been to any course since 1910. The average age of the superintendents now in service is 49.11 years.

Some of these facts may have little or no bearing on the qualifications of the present union superintendents. They are placed here because they should appear and no other place seems more appropriate.





## CHAPTER VI

### DUTIES OF UNION SUPERINTENDENTS

The early laws which sanctioned the employment of a superintendent said absolutely nothing about what his duties should be and stated only that he should have the care and supervision of the schools, and that he would act under the direction and control of the school committee. When the later laws were passed giving state aid to the union districts, it might be natural to think that some sort of regulations should have been included whereby the duties of those persons, being paid partially by the state, could have been made rather specific. No laws have been passed up to the present time stating exactly the duties of a union superintendent.

When the joint committee of a union employs a superintendent, determines his salary, and apportions the time which he is to serve in each town, the joint committee has performed all its duties pertaining to the superintendent except that of removing him if they desire to do so.

The superintendent then becomes the individual agent for each of the various towns during the portion of his time which he is supposed to spend in each town. While he is in any one of these various towns, his position is just the same as it would be if he were to spend all his time in that one town.

The policies adopted in one town of a given union need not be adopted in any of the other towns. The treatment and co-operation which a superintendent receives may, and often is, entirely different in each of the towns of a union.





In 1901, a study was made by the State Department to determine the extent, in practice, of the authority granted to superintendents in Massachusetts by the school committees. Table number 3 embodies the results of those inquiries.

The results of that study seem to show rather clearly that the superintendents were given full authority in most towns whenever the phase of the work was of a technical nature, and did not have matters of a personal nature attached to them. It is interesting to note that only 6.8 per cent of the towns were willing to allow a superintendent to dismiss a teacher without the matter being first considered by the school committee. The table shows that the committees are much more willing to give the superintendent authority to spend the money of the town, and to determine the type of education, and promotion of the children than they are to give him full authority to deal with the teachers.

The superintendent must have been given authority by each town to perform certain acts or the town is not responsible for his act. He must first become the agent of the town, which means that the town must give him authority to do an act before the town is liable. If a superintendent agrees with a manufacturing concern to purchase certain articles from them for a town, and the school committee in that town decides they don't need, or don't want the articles, the town is not liable, and the sale has not been made as far as the town is concerned.





Table Number 3 showing the duties performed by superintendents of schools in 233 towns and cities of Massachusetts, and the degree of authority exercised. The questionnaire was answered by superintendents

Duties	Number of towns in which certain degrees of authority are exercised by superintendents			
	None	Advisory	Joint	Full
1. Selection of text-books	8	85	44	92
2. Selection of reference books	9	88	38	93
3. Selection of apparatus	6	81	35	103
4. Making of course of studies	3	41	21	164
5. Nomination or certification of teachers	19	67	40	95
6. Appointment of teachers	45	89	60	21
7. Suspension of teachers	41	104	56	16
8. Dismissal of teachers	48	102	61	15
9. Inspection and direction of teachers' work		3	8	218
10. Calling and conducting teachers' meetings		2	2	224
11. Promotion of pupils	4	16	19	187
				un-
				Unanswered or certain
				4
				5
				8
				4
				12
				18
				16
				7
				4
				5
				7

Duty No. 1 shows that 8 towns gave the superintendent no authority in selecting text-books; 85 gave him advisory authority; in 44 towns the committee and superintendent had the authority jointly; in 92 towns the superintendent had full authority; and four towns failed to reply.





The duties, then, of a superintendent are only those which are given to him explicitly by the school committee, and those which he exercises in the absence of criticism and prohibitive opposition on the part of the school committee. Some superintendents assume their position and have very little control, but as time goes by they conduct affairs in such a way that they eventually have a great amount of control. Of course the converse of this statement is true if the superintendent is not alert, energetic, and diplomatic.

The duties which seem to occupy the most of the union superintendents' time are: traveling, clerical work, administration, and supervision. The average per cent of time which the present superintendents say they spend on those items are: traveling 9.58%; clerical work 16.05%; administration 29.88%; and supervision 44.85%.

In 1904, an editorial appeared in the Springfield Daily Republican newspaper on November 15 which commented on what poor economy it seemed to be to pay a superintendent such a high salary, and rightly so, and then require him to give such a large amount of his time to routine clerical duties that could be done by the average office girl at about one fourth the cost. Certainly no prosperous business concern would have its highest paid executive doing a type of work that could be done by the average wage earner. The only method by which it is possible to tell whether school systems are beginning to see the folly of not supplying clerical help is to compare the number of unions supplying it today as





compared with the number supplying it in the past. In 1923, Mr. Benner made a study and found: <sup>2</sup>

1. That only 14% of the superintendents had the services of a full time clerk; 2. only 19% had part-time clerical assistance paid for by the union. This study shows: 1. that 34% now have the services of a full time clerk; 2. that 26.42% have part-time clerical assistance; and 3. that 39.62% have no clerical help paid for by the union. This comparison seems to indicate that the superintendents are gradually being relieved of this duty. Table number 4 shows a comparison of these two studies.

Table number 4

A Comparison of Clerical Help for Union Superintendents  
in 1923 and 1935

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1923		1935
14	Percent having the service of a full time clerk	34
19	Percent having the service of a part time clerk	26.42
67	Percent having no clerical assistance	39.62

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The union superintendent must necessarily travel between the towns he is serving. The amount of time which he will spend in travelling will depend on whether his towns are contiguous or not, and also on the ability of the superintendent to organ-

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<sup>2</sup> Thomas E. Benner--The Massachusetts Superintendency Union as a Supervisory Unit--Doctor's Thesis--Harvard University p. 91





ise his work in such a way as to eliminate as much travel as possible. The automobile, the improved roads, and the keeping the snow plowed off of the roads during the winter months should reduce considerably the amount of time spent in travel. Mr. Benner found in 1923 that the average amount of time which the superintendents reported they spent was approximately 25% of their total time. This study shows that the average superintendent spends approximately 9.58% of his time travelling. The superintendents reported the amount of time spent in travel as follows:

2	spent	1%	of	their	total	time
1	"	2%	"	"	"	"
8	"	5%	"	"	"	"
2	"	7%	"	"	"	"
1	"	8%	"	"	"	"
16	"	10%	"	"	"	"
2	"	12%	"	"	"	"
2	"	13%	"	"	"	"
2	"	25%	"	"	"	"

The remainder did not answer the question or said the time spent in travel was negligible.

Although the result of this study shows that superintendents are not spending as much time in traveling today as they did in 1923, this item still occupies a great <sup>deal of</sup> time which is being spent in a rather useless manner.

The superintendents were originally employed primarily for the purpose of supervising the work of the teachers, and seeing that schools are conducted according to the best known procedures. This phase of the superintendents' duty no longer occupies the major part of the superintendents' time. Perhaps the complicated manner in which schools are conducted today makes it <sup>im</sup>possible for the average superintendent to spend

the fact is that a way as to eliminate as much travel as possible. The automobile, the improved roads, and the keeping the snow plowed off of the roads during the winter months should reduce considerably the amount of time spent in travel. Mr. Belmont found in 1923 that the average amount of time which the superintendents reported they spent was approximately 56% of their total time. This study shows that the average superintendent spends approximately 9.3% of his time traveling. The superintendents reported the amount of time spent in

travel as follows:

Superintendent	Time spent in travel
1	10%
2	10%
3	10%
4	10%
5	10%
6	10%
7	10%
8	10%
9	10%
10	10%
11	10%
12	10%
13	10%
14	10%
15	10%
16	10%
17	10%
18	10%
19	10%
20	10%

The remainder did not answer the question or said the time spent in travel was negligible. Although the result of this study shows that superintendents are not spending as much time in traveling today as they did in 1923, this does not mean that the situation is being met in a better manner. The superintendents were actually surprised that for the purpose of supervising the work of the teachers and seeing that schools are conducted according to the new laws passed. This phase of the supervisory work is no longer considered the major part of the superintendent's time. Perhaps the complicated nature of school work has increased today making possible for the average superintendent to spend



anything like a sufficient amount of time in any one place to supervise any part of the work beyond the inspectional-type of supervision. In 1923 Mr. Benner found that the superintendents reported that they spent approximately one and one-half hours each day in supervision. This study shows that the average superintendent thinks he is spending 44.85% of his time in supervising his schools. The superintendents reported the time spent in supervision as follows:

1	spent	15%	of	their	total	time
2	"	20%	"	"	"	"
6	"	25%	"	"	"	"
4	"	30%	"	"	"	"
1	"	33%	"	"	"	"
2	"	35%	"	"	"	"
5	"	40%	"	"	"	"
1	"	45%	"	"	"	"
9	"	50%	"	"	"	"
1	"	55%	"	"	"	"
6	"	60%	"	"	"	"
3	"	65%	"	"	"	"
4	"	75%	"	"	"	"

The remainder of the superintendents could not give a definite idea on this subject.

A number of reasons might possibly be given for this increase in time spent in supervision; perhaps the greatest being that the average superintendent is better qualified for the task today than in 1923.

When superintendents were first employed, they were not required to spend as much time in administrative work as they are today. Mr. Benner did not try to find the amount of time which the superintendents thought they used in administration. This study shows that the average superintendent thinks he spends 29.88 of his time in administrative work. The superintendents reported the time spent in administration as follows:





2	spent	12%	of	their	total	time
3	"	15%	"	"	"	"
9	"	20%	"	"	"	"
10	"	25%	"	"	"	"
6	"	30%	"	"	"	"
3	"	33%	"	"	"	"
2	"	35%	"	"	"	"
7	"	40%	"	"	"	"
1	"	45%	"	"	"	"
3	"	50%	"	"	"	"
2	"	55%	"	"	"	"

The reaminder of the superintendents did not answer the question.

Other duties which superintendents said occupied appreciable amounts of their time were as follows:

Items	number of times mentioned
1. Contacts with patrons	11
2. Community activities	10
3. F.E.R.A. projects	5
4. Agents and salesmen	4
5. Attendance at conventions	3
6. Building program	2
7. Professional improvement	1
8. Attending P.T.A. meetings	1
9. School committee meetings	1
10. Supervision of janitors	1

There are many other duties which the union superintendent has to perform. He has to be the most outstanding interpreter of the school system to the community. If he is not the type of man who will gain and hold the respect and confidence of the people he is serving, the school system is certain to border on mediocrity or inferiority. The editorial in the Springfield newspaper condemned those persons who made it necessary for the superintendent to spend large amounts of time and energy in combating factional quarrels or political intrigues in the school committee. Until matters pertaining to schools are taken entirely out of the hands of politicians,





it is likely that one of the large duties of a superintendent will be that of promoting harmony and justice within the committee which employs him.





## CHAPTER VII

### Salaries and Tenure of Union Supts.

#### A. Salary

The first law which mentioned minimum wages for superintendents was passed in 1860 and provided that in no case should the compensation be less than one dollar and fifty cents for each day of actual service. This law was not referring to union superintendents. When the law of 1870 was passed authorizing two or more towns to form a union, it made no mention of the minimum salary which the superintendents should receive and, apparently, left the determination of his salary entirely to the judgment of the joint committee which appointed him.

When the law of 1888 was passed, it was provided that the towns of a union should unitedly raise \$750 for the support of a superintendent and that the state would pay the union \$1,000, of which \$500 was to be paid for the salary of the superintendent. The first union composed of Duxbury, Marshfield, and Scituate decided to pay their superintendent the minimum salary when they first formed the union.

In 1890, the state increased its contribution from \$500 to \$750 for the payment of superintendents' salaries. This increase made the minimum salary \$1500, which sum remained as the minimum until 1921 when the present minimum salary schedule was put into effect.<sup>1</sup>

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1 Acts of 1921 Section 63 Page 46





In the 1918 report of the Secretary of the Board of Education, the following table appears: <sup>2</sup>

Table No. 5 Salaries of union superintendents Oct. 1917

Salary	Number of superintendents receiving such salary	Salary	Number of superintendents receiving such salary
1500	5	2000	15
1600	6	2025	1
1650	1	2100	2
1675	1	2200	2
1700	9	2250	1
1750	3	2300	1
1800	11	2400	5
1900	6	2410	1
1925	1	2500	1
1950	1	2600	2

From the above table, it appears that there were 75 union superintendents in the state receiving annual salaries ranging from \$1,500 to \$2,600, the median salary being \$1,900; the average \$1,911; and the mode \$2,000. Twenty-five received less than \$1,800; 34 received from \$1,800 to \$2,000 inclusive; and 16 received more than \$2000.

At that time, the board thought the salaries were entirely

In the 1918 report of the Secretary of the Board of Education, the following table appears:

Table No. 2. Salaries of union superintendents Oct. 1917

Salary	Number of superintendents receiving such salary	Salary	Number of superintendents receiving such salary
1500	3	2000	12
1600	6	2025	1
1650	1	2100	2
1675	1	2200	2
1700	2	2250	1
1750	2	2300	1
1800	11	2400	2
1900	2	2410	1
1925	1	2500	1
1950	1	2600	2

From the above table, it appears that there were 75 union superintendents in the state receiving annual salaries ranging from \$1,500 to \$2,600, the median salary being \$1,900; the average \$1,911; and the mode \$2,000. Twenty-five received less than \$1,900; 24 received from \$1,900 to \$2,000 inclusive; and 15 received more than \$2,000.

At that time, the board thought the salaries were actually



too low and that the union superintendents should not have to pay their own travelling expenses which were estimated at about \$2000 a year. The secretary stated, in the citation given above, that, "While the position of union superintendent is one of those which calls for men of the highest type of educational leadership, the actual salary paid in many instances is less than that paid to manual training or commercial teachers in many high schools, and scarcely more than the salaries of capable secretaries, stenographers, and clerks in private commercial or industrial establishments."

By making a similar salary study in 1934, it was found that the following salaries were paid:

Table number 6

Salaries of Union Superintendents--Sept. 1934

Salary	Number of superintendents receiving such salary	Salary	Number of superintendents receiving such salary
2500	3	3400	3
2600	2	3440	1
2700	3	3500	5
2800	3	3600	6
2880	1	3750	1
2900	1	3800	2
2970	1	3825	1
3000	12	3900	2
3060	1	4000	2
3100	2	4100	1
3125	1	4200	1
3150	1	4275	1
3200	4	4300	1
3220	2	4400	1
3250	2	4462	1
3300	2	4775	1
3350	1	5100	1





From this table, one can find that there are 73 union superintendents now in the state receiving annual salaries ranging from \$2500 to \$5100, the median salary being \$3220; the average \$3349.91; and the mode, \$3000. Fourteen received less than \$3000; 51 received from \$3000 to \$4000 inclusive; and eight received over \$4000.

The average amount listed for travelling expenses in 1935 is \$380.74.

The present minimum schedule is as follows: for the first year of service, \$2,200; for the second year of service, \$2,300; for the third year \$2,400; and for the fourth year, \$2,500. If the salary of the superintendent is not over \$2900, the union is required to reimburse him for his actual travelling expenses incurred in the discharge of his duties, but such reimbursement can be limited to \$400 by the committee.

In 1906, Mr. John T. Prince noted the necessity of having a minimum salary for the superintendents and advocated making this minimum large enough<sup>1</sup> to attract to the office the best of teachers!

When one notes the gradual increase in the average salaries paid to the union superintendents, it becomes evident that some effort has been made to follow the suggestion made by Prince. The average salaries as shown by graph number 1 are given in five year intervals starting with January 1900, when the average was \$1,542.31; in 1905, it was \$1559.14; in 1910, it was \$1640.51; in 1915 it was \$1775.67; in 1920, it

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1 John T. Prince--School Administration

From this table one can find that there are 78 unions  
superintendents now in the state receiving annual salaries  
ranging from \$2500 to \$5100, the median salary being \$3250;  
the average \$3542.51; and the mode, \$3000. Fourteen received  
less than \$2000; 51 received from \$2000 to \$4000 inclusive;  
and eight received over \$4000.

The average amount listed for travelling expenses is

1935 is \$350.74.

The present minimum schedule is as follows: For the

first year of service, \$3,200; for the second year of service,  
\$3,500; for the third year \$3,800; and for the fourth year,

\$3,800. If the salary of the superintendent is not over

\$3800, the union is required to reimburse him for his actual

travelling expenses incurred in the discharge of his duties.

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are given in five year intervals starting with January 1900,

when the average was \$1,542.51; in 1905, it was \$1822.14; in

1910, it was \$1940.51; in 1915 it was \$1750.67; in 1920, it



was \$2305.42; in 1925, it was \$2953.14; in 1930, it was \$3426.48; and in 1934, it was \$3349.91. The slight reduction in the average salary of 1935 as compared with the average salary of 1930 is caused by the depression. A number of the superintendents took voluntary cuts when it became necessary for towns to cut the pay of teachers; others had their pay reduced by the unions when they came up for re-election.

The State Department can, to a great extent, determine the salaries for union superintendents by limiting the supply of men who have certificates. If the salaries are maintained at a fairly high level, according to Prince, the teachers with the most ability will in many instances be attracted to the profession and, as a result, the schools in the districts will be managed more effectively. If the salaries are only comparable to the pay of principal or teacher, one big incentive to become a superintendent is certain to be lost.

was \$2303.43; in 1935, it was \$2353.14; in 1936 it was \$2428.44;

and in 1937, it was \$2447.81. The slight reduction in the

average salary of 1935 as compared with the average salary of

1930 is caused by the depression. A number of the superintend-

ents took voluntary cuts when it became necessary for them

to cut the pay of teachers; others had their pay reduced by

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be managed more effectively. If the salaries are only com-

parable to the pay of principal or teacher, one big incentive

to become a superintendent is certain to be lost.



## B. TENURE

The first law which gave cities and towns the right to require their school committee to employ a superintendent was passed in 1854 and provided for the annual appointment of a superintendent. This law did not apply to union superintendencies. In 1873, an amendment was passed which stated that the superintendent did not need to be elected annually. It did not state any length of time for which he should be employed.

The law of 1870 which sanctioned the union of towns said that the superintendent should be annually appointed. The law of 1888 said that the joint committee should meet annually and choose, by ballot, a superintendent of schools. This law was not changed until 1911 when the words "choose by ballot" were stricken out and the word "employ" substituted for them; also, the following words were added, "such superintendents of school shall be employed for a term of three years, and his salary shall not be reduced during such term."

At the time this amendment was passed, the Board of Education recommended that the tenure of office of the superintendent of schools be lengthened and made more secure for a number of reasons: first, the scarcity of desirable men for the office was in part due to an insecurity of tenure which the work presented, such as characterized few other professions; second, no superintendent entering a new community could, in one year, make clear his administrative purposes and qualifications. At least two or three years were thought necessary for





this purpose; third, the board through the school committee should exercise extreme caution in electing a superintendent, and, having been selected, he should be given free and full opportunity to demonstrate his ability to deal with the situation.

The Board thought that the effect of this law would be both to induce the school committees to maintain higher standards in the selection of superintendents and to give more careful recognition to the professional aspects of his work. 2

This three year tenure law remains in effect today and all the union superintendents are elected for a term of three years. This does not mean that they are absolutely secure in their positions during this period. If the joint committee wishes, and can show just cause for doing so, it can dismiss the superintendent during the three-year term. The superintendent can ask for a hearing before the State Board, but it seems that the Board has usually thought it best to change the superintendent when harmony could no longer be maintained.

John Prince 3 argued that the tenure of a superintendent after a probationary period should be as permanent as that of a teacher. Teachers are now placed on tenure in Massachusetts when they are elected for their fourth year in a position. Mr. Prince did not designate the length of the suggested <sup>superintendents'</sup> probationary period, but we may assume that he would advocate the same period as for teachers.

this purpose; and, the board through the school committee should exercise extreme caution in electing a superintendent, and, having been selected he should be given time and full opportunity to demonstrate his ability to deal with the situation.

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This three year term law remains in effect today and all the union superintendents are elected for a term of three years. This does not mean that they are absolutely secure in their positions during this period. If the joint committee wishes, and can show just cause for doing so, it can displace the superintendent during the three-year term. The superintendent can not for a hearing before the State Board, but it seems that the board has usually thought it best to change the superintendent when harmony could no longer be maintained. John Prince 3 argued that the tenure of a superintendent after a probationary period should be as permanent as that of a teacher. Teachers are now placed on tenure in Massachusetts when they are elected for their fourth year in a position. Mr. Prince did not denigrate the length of the suggested probationary period, but he may assume that he would advocate the same period as for teachers.



Such a law might cause more able persons to enter the profession, but it is possible to think that able people seldom remain where they are not wanted<sup>and</sup>//consequently, do not need a tenure law to protect them.





## CHAPTER VIII

### CHANGES IN SUPERINTENDENCY UNIONS

In this chapter, only the unions formed after the passage of the law of 1888 will be considered. It is impossible to find, in a study of this type, just why all the changes have taken place. In 1904, George Martin who was then Secretary of the State Board of Education said that the reason for most of the trouble in the unions was due to the differences in opinion in regard to the qualifications of the superintendents, both before and after elections. <sup>1</sup>

Some unions were made on a contract basis for a definite period of time, and the contracts were not renewed because of dissatisfactions.

Some unions were dissolved because one or more of the towns composing a union would increase in evaluation to the extent that state aid would no longer be given. A number of such towns left a union and combined the positions of superintendent and principal. A few such towns are: Acton, Cohasset, Duxbury, etc. In 1899, the State Department did not favor the uniting of these two offices. <sup>2</sup> It was thought that work in either capacity was liable to be at the expense of work in the other. It was agreed that exceptional conditions might excuse such a union, as in the case of a school being so fully and ably-equipped with teachers that the withdrawal of much of the principal's attention

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1 Sixty-eighth Annual Report of the Board of Education 1903-4 p. 108

2 Sixty-third Annual Report of the Board of Education 1898-99 p. 168

CHANGES IN SUPERINTENDENCY UNIONS

In this chapter only the unions formed after the

passage of the law of 1893 will be considered. It is im-

possible to find, in a study of this type, just why all the

changes have taken place. In 1904 George Martin who was then

Secretary of the State Board of Education said that the reason

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Some unions were dissolved because one or more of the

towns composing a union would increase in valuation so

the extent that state aid would no longer be given. A

number of such towns left a union and occupied the position

of independent and principal. A few such towns are:

Acron, Goshert, Kunkin, etc. In 1893 the State

Department did not favor the uniting of these two offices.

It was thought that work in either capacity was liable to be

at the expense of work in the other. It was agreed that

exceptional conditions might excuse such a union, as in the

case of School being so fully and ably equipped with teachers

that the withdrawal of so much of the principal's attention

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- 1 Sixty-eighth Annual Report of the Board of Education 1903-4 p. 108
  - 2 Sixty-third Annual Report of the Board of Education 1898-99 p. 108



is a matter of reduced seriousness. The Department thought that in some cases, the committees were not entirely wrong in deciding it was better to pay one <sup>effecient</sup> // - man a good salary for the double service than two doubtful men insignificant salaries for the divided service.

In some cases, where one town had grown rapidly and wished to leave a union, it worked a hardship on a smaller town which could not get into a suitable union with other towns.

In the following table, the superintendency unions have been taken as they were formed and an attempt has been made to show what has happened to them in the evolutionary years from 1888 to 1935.

Union Number	Towns composing union	date formed	date of change	What happened to the towns
1	Duxbury Marshfield Scituate	1888	1926	Duxbury left the union and was governed by a superintendent-principal. Scituate and Marshfield still form the union.
2	Hubbardson Phillipson Royalston Templeton	1889		
3	Ashland Hopkinton	1889		
4	Erving Orange Wendell	1889		This union was completely dissolved. Orange never entered another union.
4.	Easthampton Southampton Westhampton	1889		





5	Conway Sunderland Whately Williamsburg	1889	1901	This union was completely dissolved. All entered other unions at later dates.
6	Holden Leicester	1890	1900	Completely dissolved. Towns later entered other unions.
5	Barre Hardwich Petersham	1890		
6	Berlin Northborough Shrewsbury Southborough	1890	1920	Shrewsbury left and has had a separate superintendent and a principal since that time. The other three towns still form union number 6.
7	Becket Chester Middlefield Washington	1890	1911	Washington left and later entered another union. The other three towns constitute union No. 7 at present.
8	Brimfield Monson	1890	1924	The town of Wales was added.
9	Princeton Sterling Westminister	1890		
10	Mansfield Sharon Stoughton	1891	1913	Completely dissolved. None of the towns ever entered a union thereafter.
11	Dracut North Reading Tweksbury Tyngsborough	1891	1911 1914 1924	Wilmington was added. Wilmington was dropped. Completely dissolved. All the towns except Dracut entered other unions.
10	Brookfield North Brookfield	1891	1921	East Brookfield was added.





11	Grafton upton	1891		
12	Agawam Granville Southwick	1891	1903	Completely dissolved. The towns entered other unions.
12	Dudley Millbury Oxbord	1891	1903	Dudley dropped in order to enter another union
13	Abington Bridgewater	1891	1913	Completely dissolved. The towns did not enter any other union.
13	Buckland Colrain Shelbourne	1892		
14	Bourne Mashpee Sandwich	1892		
15	East Bridgewater Raynham West Bridgewater	1892	1912 1920	Raynham dropped to enter another union. Completely dissolved to form new union.
15	Dennis Yarmouth	1892	1903	Brewster added by decree of the State Board of Education.
16	Warren Wales	1893	1902 1916	Holland was admitted Holland and Wales left the union to join others and New Braintree and West Brookfield composed the newly arranged
17	Lunenburg Winchendon	1893	1905	union No. 16  Completely dissolved. Town entered other unions.
17	East Longmeadow Longmeadow Hampden Ludlow Wilbraham		1903	Ludlow dropped
18	Dartmouth Westport	1893	1911	Completely dissolved. Towns did not enter other unions.





18	Hanover Hanson Norwell	1894		
19	Provincetown Wellfleet	1894	1902	Truro was added
19	Cheshire Dalton	1894	1912	Completely dis- solved. Dalton did not enter any other union, but Cheshire did.
20	Norton Wrentham	1894	1901 1911	Plainsville added union dissolved. Towns entered other unions.
20	Bellingham Hopedale Mendon	1894	1934	Hopedale left and did not enter any other unions.
21	Brewster Eastham Harwich Orleans	1894	1903	Brewster was taken from the union by the State Board and placed in union 12, and Chatham was placed in this union at the same time by the State Board.
22	Granby South Hadley	1895		
23	Deerfield Hatfield Leverett	1895	1901	Completely dissolv- ed. Towns all en- tered other unions.
23	Gill Northfield Warwick	1895	1901	Leyden was added Bernardson was added.
24	Bolton Boylston Harvard Shirley	1895	1909	Completely dissolved All the towns en- tered other unions.
24	Cottage City Edgartown Tisbury West Tisbury	1895	1897 1902 1925	Chilmark was added Gay Head was " Gosnold " "

18	Harvey Hanson Norwell	1884	Turno was added
19	Provincetown Wellfleet	1884	
19	Greenville Lorton	1884	Completely dis- solved. Lorton did not enter any other union but Greenville did
20	Boston Wrentham	1884	Wrentham added Lorton dissolved. Turno entered of union.
20	Bellingham Hopkinton Hanson	1884	Hopkinton left and did not enter any other unions.
21	Brewster Eastham Horton Orleans	1884	Brewster was taken from the union by the State Board and placed in an 12, and Orleans placed in this union at the same time by the State Board.
22	Stony South Weymouth	1885	
22	Beetlefield Horton Lewiston	1885	Completely dis- solved. Lorton entered other union
22	Wrentham Horton Wrentham	1885	Horton was added Wrentham was added.
24	Boston Horton Horton Wrentham	1885	Completely dis- solved. All the other unions entered other union
24	Wrentham Horton Horton Wrentham	1885	Wrentham was added Horton was added Horton was added Wrentham was added



25	Georgetown Groveland Rowley	1895	1912	Boxford was added
26	Carlisle Chelmsford Dunstable	1896	1911	Completely dissolved. Carlisle and Sunstable entered other unions, but Chelmsford did not.
26	Holliston Medway Sherborn	1896		
27	Acushnet Fairhaven Mattapoisett	1897	1919 1924	Marion was added Marion and Acushnet left the union and have not entered any other union.
28	Charlemont Florida Hawley Monroe Rowe	1897	1902	Heath was added Florida and Munroe left and entered another union.
29	Ashby Townsend	1897	1905	Luenburg was added.
30	Dover Sudbury Wayland	1898		
31	New Braintree Sturbridge West Brookfield	1898	1924	New Braintree and West Brookfield left to enter union 16; and Charlton and Holland entered this union.
32	Ayer West Boylston	1898	1908	Completely dissolved. Towns entered other unions.
32	Acton Littleton Westford	1898	1911 1925 1926	Carlisle was added Westford dropped out. Completely dissolved. Littleton joined another union, then other two towns did not.





32	Foxborough West Newbury	1899	1905	Completely dissolved. West Newbury entered another union, Foxborough did not.
32	Medfield Walpole	1900	1908	Completely dissolved. Medfield entered another union, Foxborough did not. Walpole did not.
32	Billerica Merrimac	1899	1904	Completely dissolved. Both towns entered other unions.
32	Freetown Seekonk Swansea	1900	1902	Somerset was added. Completely dissolved. All the towns except Freetown united to form a new union number 76 at that time
32	Marion Wareham	1900	1911	Completely dissolved. In 1919 Marion entered another union. Wareham did not enter any other.
32	Holden Oakham Paxton Rutland	1900		
33	Ashfield Cummington Goshen Plainfield	1900		
34	Bedford Burlington Lincoln Wilmington	1900	1906 1910 1918	Lincoln left and did not enter any other union. Wilmington left to enter another union. Completely dissolved. Belmont did not enter another union, but the other two towns did.
34	Lynnfield Wakefield	1900	1912	Completely dissolved. Wakefield did not enter another union, but Lynnfield did.





34	Amherst Pelham	1901		
35	Bernardson Hadley Hatfield	1901	1917	Bernardson left to enter union 23.
36	Blandford Huntington Montgomery Russell	1901		
37	Avon Holbrook Randolph	1901		
38	Douglas Uxbridge	1901		
39	Irving Leverett Shutesbury Wendell	1901		
40	Lee Monterey Otis Tyringham	1901		
41	Hinsdale Peru Savoy Windsor	1901	1912	Savoy was transferred from the union by the State Board and Washington was put in this union.
42	Reading Topsfield	1901	1908	Completely dissolved. Towns entered other unions.
42	Halifax Kingston Pembroke Plympton	1901		
43	Marblehead Newbury Salisbury	1901	1905	Completely dissolved. Marblehead did not enter another union. The other towns did.
43	Clarksburg	1902	1912	Clarksburg left to enter another union





	Hancock Lanesborough New Ashford			and Cheshire entered this union.
44	Dana Freenwich New Salem Prescott	1912		
45	Auburn Sutton	1902		
46	Essex Hamilton Ipswich Wenham	1902	1905 1912	Ipswich left and did not enter any other union. Middleton entered this union at this time. Hamilton left to that Lynfield and Topsfield entered.
			1917	Middleton left the union and Hamilton entered.
47	Carver Lakeville Rochester	1902		
48	Millis Norfolk Westwood	1902	1908	Mefield was added
49	Mt. Washington New Marlborough Sheffield	1902		
50	Chesterfield Williamsburg Worthington	1902		
51	Alford Egremont Richmond West Stockbridge			
52	Berkley Dighton Rehoboth	1902	1923	Rehoboth left to enter union 53 and Freetown entered this union.
53	Rehoboth Seekonk	1923		
54	Charlton Leicester	1902	1923	Charlton entered union 31 and Leicester did not join any other union.





54	Boxborough Maynard Stow	1902	1920	Boxborough dropped out and entered another union. Completely dissolved. Stow entered another union. Maynard did not.
54	Conway Deerfield Sunderland Whately	1903		
55	Agawam Ludlow	1903	1917	Completely dissolved. Neither of the towns entered a union again.
55	Granville Sandisfield Southwich Tolland	1903		
56	Dudley Webster	1903		
57	Merrimac North Andover	1903	1909	Completely dissolved. Merrimac entered another union. North Andover did not.
57	Billerica Enfield	1904	1909	
58	Boxford Newbury Salisbury West Newbury	1905	1908	Topsfield entered. Topsfield and Boxford left this union and entered others, and Merrimac entered.
59	Ashburnham Winchendon	1905		
60	Bolton Harvard Pepperell	1909	1911 1926	by decree of the State Board of Education
60	Ayer Boylston Shirley West Boylston	1909	1921	This union formed by decree of State Board
61	Seekonk	1909	1913	Boylston and West Boylston became a separate union with Shrewsbury. Boxborough entered this union in 1921





	Somerset Swansea		1929	Seekonk left to enter another union.
61	Freetown Stoneham	1909	1911	Completely dissolved. Freetown entered another union. Billerica entered another in 1920
61	Amesbury Merrimac	1909	1912	Completely dissolved. Merrimac entered another union. Amesbury did not.
61	Freetown Westport	1911	1916 1925	Gosnold was added.  The union was completely dissolved. Freetown and Gosnold entered other unions. Westport remained outside of any union.
61	Foxborough Norton Plainville	1911	1925	Foxborough left the union and did not enter any other.
62	Franklin Wrentham	1911		
63	Clarksburg Florida Monroe Savoy			
64	Blackstone Seekonk	1913	1917 1923	Millville was added. Seekonk left this union to enter union 53
65	Bedford Stoneham	1915	1920	Completely dissolved. Bedford entered union 68 and Stoneham did not join any other union.
65	Boxford Middleton Wilmington	1916	1929	Boxford left to join union 25 and Tweksbury entered this union.





66	Billerica Burlington	1920
67	Raynham West Bridgewater	1920
68	Bedford Lexington	1921
69	North Reading Reading	1922
70	Dunstable Pepperell Tyngsborough	1909 1909 1924
71	Bolton Carlisle Harvard Littleton Stow	1926
72	Essex Manchester	1929
73	Boylston West Boylston	1921

It is possible that some of the data given in the above table is misplaced, but care has been taken to trace correctly the formation of, and changes in all the unions since 1888.

Where the same number is used to designate two or more unions, the last union corresponds with that number in the 1935 Educational Directory published by the State Department. (Notice there are two unions given as number 65--the second union is listed as number 65 in the directory).

The data given in this table was secured from the annual reports of the State Department of Education starting with the report of 1890 and considering all the reports from then to 1935.





## CHAPTER IX

### SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### A. Summary

The system of having a Superintendent supervise the schools started to develop in the second quarter of the nineteenth century. The growth in the number of schools, the training of better teachers, the complexity of school management are a few of the reasons why school committees favored the employment of some person professionally-trained to perform the duties which state laws required them to perform. It may be that the superintendent-method of managing industry caused the committees to feel that one competent person spending his entire time with school affairs could manage the schools more effectively, more efficiently, and more economically.

It was difficult for the smaller towns to obtain the services of a professionally-trained superintendent because the schools of one town were not large enough to occupy all his time, and the expense of paying his salary was beyond the means of one town. In order for these small towns to obtain the services of a superintendent, two or more of them would join together for the purpose of employing and paying him, and would apportion the time that he should serve in each town.

It was difficult to convince many people in small towns that the schools needed the supervision of a superintendent. The people could not see that the school situation had





changed since the days when they went to school. Town jealousies and hatreds also hindered the formation of unions; and a still greater difficulty was the securing of a favorable vote in all the proposed towns at the same time. The towns were hesitant about sharing the management of their schools with the State. The main difficulty was finding suitable men to fill the position as superintendent.

In 1870, a law was passed authorizing two or more towns to join for the purpose of employing a superintendent. Only five unions were formed under this law. In 1888, a law was passed which gave State aid to two or more towns of certain valuation and <sup>which contained a specified</sup> number of schools if they would unite to employ a superintendent. Forty-nine unions were formed under this law before 1900. In the year 1900, a law was passed saying that all towns which came within the specification of the law of 1888 had to enter a union on or before July 1, 1902.

The first union formed under the law of 1888 was composed of Duxbury, Marshfield, and Scituate. The method used in the formation of that union was the original and probably provided some suggestions for other towns afterwards. In those towns the committees commented on the formation of a union for some time before asking the people to vote on the subject. After the union was formed, the committees continued to advocate





the retention of the system.

A law of 1834 required the school committee of every town in the state to visit every school at least once a month. A law of 1854 made it possible for cities and towns to require their school committees to employ a superintendent. A law of 1860 made one dollar and fifty cents the minimum salary for each day the superintendent spent in actual service. A law of 1870 permitted towns to join in the employment of a superintendent. The law of 1888 gave state aid to towns whose valuation did not exceed \$2,500,000 and <sup>where</sup> the aggregate number of schools in the proposed union did not ~~exceed~~ fifty, if the <sup>se</sup> towns would form unions to annually employ superintendents. A law of 1900 required towns of less than a certain valuation to enter a union. A law of 1904 stated that all superintendents employed in state-aided unions after January 1, 1905 should hold a certificate of fitness and competency from the State Board. A law of 1913 stated that union superintendents should be employed for a three-year term. All the laws governing the union superintendencies are given in revised form in the codified laws of 1932.

No definite qualifications had been established for superintendents prior to 1904. The first certificates were given as a result of an examination held on October 7, 1904. The State Department at that time recommended a course of study for prospective candidates.





The certificate was valid for one, three, or five years.

After 1913 the only kind of a certificate ~~which was~~ granted was for a term of three years. The candidates were required to pass written examinations in five subjects; they had to have a college education or the equivalent; they had to pass an oral examination; and, they had to have a record of at least two years of satisfactory teaching or supervision, or both. Since 1933 the candidate has to have at least five years of satisfactory experience in school work, at least two of which must be in the field of school supervision or administration, or both. A candidate must get the consent of the department before he can take the examinations. The State Department reserves the right <sup>to</sup> /revoke a certificate at any time it sees fit to do so.

The duties of the union superintendent are not clearly defined by law. Whatever authority he has is granted to him by the committees in the towns which he serves. A pamphlet which the State Department published in 1915, entitled "Union Superintendences in Massachusetts" said that that the law did give definite duties and powers to superintendents, and required them to recommend teachers, text-books, and courses of study; to act as the executive officer of the school committee; and assist in keeping records and accounts and in making reports. The pamphlet did not give any citation for this law, and the law cannot be located at this time.

It is known that some teachers are hired these days without the recommendation of the superintendent. As long as the superintendent is employed by a school committee, he must





remain under their guidance and direction. He may prove his ability and obtain a <sup>great deal</sup> of power and authority which he can hold only as long as the committee which employs him is in favor of him and his policies.

School committees in 1901 usually gave the superintendent most of the authority in: (1) pupil promotion; (2) calling and conducting teacher's meetings; (3) inspection and direction of teacher's work; and (4) making courses of study. The authority seemed to be vested jointly in the following instances: (1) selection of text-books; (2) selection of reference books; (3) selection of apparatus; and (4) nomination or certification of teachers. The school committees tended to retain authority regarding: (1) appointment of teachers; (2) suspension of teachers and (3) dismissal of teachers. It may be that a study made today would show different results. The superintendent, advised by his teachers, selects most of the texts, reference books, and apparatus in the schools today.

Most of the present superintendents indicated that they spent their time as follows: (1) in supervision 44.85%; (2) in administration 29.88%; (3) in clerical work 16.05%; and (4) in travel 9.58%. The amount of time spent in clerical work and in travel has reduced greatly since 1923. 34% of the unions supply full-time clerks and 26.42% supply part-time clerks.

A large number of superintendents stated that they spent appreciable amounts of time making contacts with school patrons and in the activities of the communities

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which they serve.

The minimum salary for union superintendents has increased from \$1250 to \$2200. In 1918, the average salary was \$1911 and in 1934, it was \$3349.91. The average salary has been gradually increasing since 1900 and it is hoped that the salary and position will attract the best teachers to the profession.

The superintendents were at first employed for a term of only one year. This term has been increased to three years, but it is possible to dismiss the superintendent, with the consent of the State department, before the three year-period is up.

One hundred and eleven unions have been formed in the State since 1888. Of this number, only 43 exist today unchanged from the way they were started. The oldest unchanged unions are number two, composed of Hubbardson, Phillipson, Royalston, and Templeton and number three, composed of Ashland and Hopkinton. These unions were formed in 1888.

### Conclusions

The writer thinks that the union superintendency system of school supervision and administration has been firmly established in the state of Massachusetts and that unless the politicians wish to change the order of things, as they have done in New Hampshire, the system will continue as long as the small towns need the service. If the





towns become large enough to employ a superintendent individually, that may change the system rightfully.

The writer thinks that the union superintendents are much better qualified today than they were in 1923 when Mr. Benner made his study. The gradual increase in the salaries of the union superintendents show that the towns are convinced of their ability and importance. In general, the superintendents with the better training have the better jobs and the higher salaries.

#### B. Recommendations

A few changes are recommended in regard to: (1) the size of unions; (2) the re-adjustment of unions; (3) the method of giving state aid; (4) provisions for clerks to assist union superintendent; (5) the certification of union superintendents; (6) the minimum salary law; (7) the term or tenure law; (8) the appointment of a state supervisor of union superintendents.

Each of these points will be considered very briefly.

(1) The state should not allow any union to be composed of more than three towns regardless of the number of schools and the evaluation of the towns.

Many union superintendents have tried to answer a question in regard to the comparative difficulty of managing the schools in the town where they live and the other towns of the union. Their answer is either that they know so little about the people in the other towns that they are not bothered, or the people have no use for them because they are not a member of





their community. It is difficult indeed for a superintendent to maintain harmony in three school committees, and by increasing the number of towns, the difficulty becomes proportionally greater. If a superintendent has over three committees to deal with, a greater amount of his nervous energy must be spent in this manner. The effort which he must spend in this way cannot be spent in helping to educate the child. The superintendent should enter into community activities as much as possible, and it is impossible for him to do much in any town if he has to try to divide his time among so many. There are twenty unions, at present, composed of four towns; two composed of five; and one composed of seven. The writer thinks that we might well limit the number of towns in any union to three with the hope that this would give the superintendents more time to become members of the communities that they serve, and in order that they may serve this smaller number to a better advantage in every way.

(2) The State Department should re-adjust the unions in such a way that the towns would all be contiguous in order to minimize the time spent in travel. If the law of 1913 does not give the Department authority to make the necessary changes, the writer thinks that such a law should be passed. About one-tenth of the union superintendent's time is now spent in travel. This could probably be cut in half, if the unions were composed of not over three towns which were located side by side. This time saved might well be used for other purposes which would be much more beneficial to the child being educated.





(3) Many towns are now receiving state aid and have a much higher valuation per child to be educated than other towns. For example, the town of Dracut has a population of 6,912, a valuation of \$4,018,360 and has 1387 pupils enrolled in school. This means that the town has a valuation of \$2,767 per pupil being educated. The tax rate for educating each child is \$18.28. In the town of Scituate, the total population is 3,118, the total valuation is 12,896,178, and the town is educating 753 pupils. Scituate has a valuation of \$17,690 per pupil being educated, and the tax rate for school support is only \$5.45. It does seem that there is some injustice in the State giving aid to Scituate and not to Dracut when Scituate is approximately seven times as wealthy per child as Dracut.

At least two things should be taken into consideration in giving state aid. First the number of school children to be educated and the town valuation per child. Second the state should prepare a state valuation index of the various towns telling whether the property in a town was assessed at its approximate value or not. By such a method the state might be able to give aid where it was really needed most.

(4) If the state is paying two thirds of the superintendents salary which amounts on the average to approximately \$3500 it seems that the state should try to keep the superintendent busy at a type of work which would justify the payment of such a salary. To have him sit in an office and do clerical work one fourth of his time, when no clerk is supplied





by the union, seems to the writer to be an unprofitable expense. An office girl could do the same work, just as efficiently at about one fourth the cost. The writer believes that every union superintendent should have the assistance of a full time office girl and that the expense should be met in a comparable manner to the way the superintendents salary is paid.

(5) There must be a science of teaching and that teachers should be taught to teach according to scientific principles. It has been said that Normal Schools and Colleges should prepare people to teach according to these principles. The writer does not believe that a superintendent is competent to supervise unless he, too, has mastered these fundamental principles. The fact that the average superintendent has forty semester hours in education is not sufficient to assure the writer that our superintendents are qualified to supervise. The writer believes that most of the present superintendents and all future candidates could profit very much by a thorough course in methods of teaching where they would have a chance to observe and discuss good teaching with those who knew good teaching when they saw it.

If the superintendents were able to give wise counsel to young teachers who were in difficulties a large number of broken hearts and spirits might be prevented, and a number of persons made to feel that they had been ably assisted in a time of need.

The present method of conducting examinations for certification puts too much emphasis on book knowledge, and theory of education; and, not enough on the candidates ability to observe and criticize





intelligently the work of a teacher in such a way as to improve the teacher in his or her work.

(6) The present minimum salary law should be amended so that the minimum salary would be \$3000. At present only fourteen out of the seventy-three are receiving less than this amount and it seems likely that the quality of the men entering the profession would be improved upon if the salary were large enough to surpass the amount being paid in other positions which are perhaps a little less difficult and tedious. There should be a marked difference between the salaries paid to teachers, principals, and superintendents, because of the increased responsibilities attached to each position. If there is not this marked difference in salaries, wise men will prefer not to feel the burden of these added responsibilities.

(7) The superintendent should be governed by the same tenure laws as teachers and principals. After a superintendent has served a union for three years and has been elected for another term, it is no more likely that he will prove to be incompetent in the future than that a teacher or principal will prove to be incompetent. After talking with a number of capable men who have said they would not consider becoming union superintendents because of the insecurity of the position, the writer feels that something should be done to make the position more secure.

(8) The state spends approximately \$163,000 annually for salaries of union superintendents and the money would be well spent if the State Department would appoint a supervisor of union superintendents and develop a program whereby





this man would try to improve the union superintendents in service and establish some sort of a uniformity of practices in the unions. The combined efforts of all the men, if organized under proper leadership and supervision, could undoubtedly improve the rural schools very much.

It is likely that the recommendations stated above have been thought of before and have been considered by those working on this problem. If they are impractical the writer would not want them to be given a trial, but if any of them have the basis of sound judgment the writer would like to see them tried.





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